This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 2044 010 661 528

Digitized by Google

OTT3158.54.3

HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

GLEANINGS

FROM

PICCADILLY TO PERA.

Digitized by Google

LONDON:
A. and G. A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-street-Square.

Digitized by Google

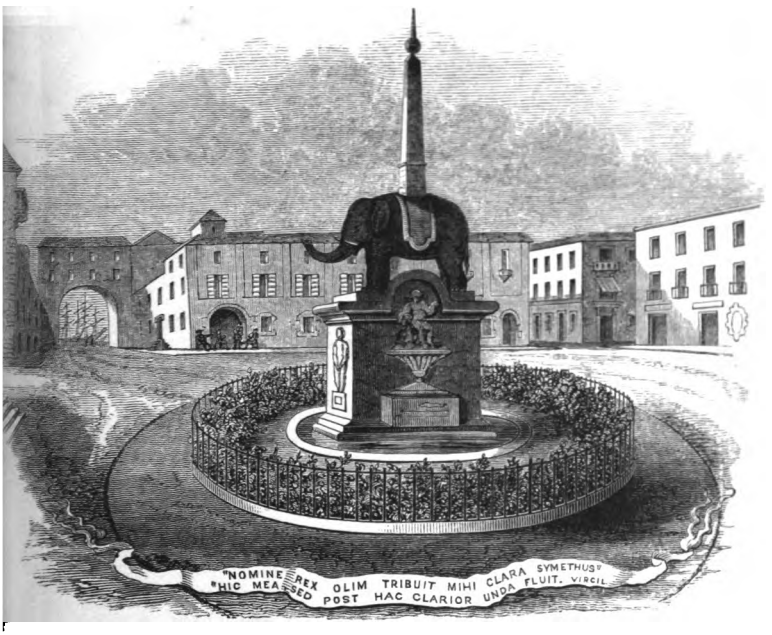
GLEANINGS

FROM

PICCADILLY TO PERA.

BY JOHN OLDMIXON, ESQ.,

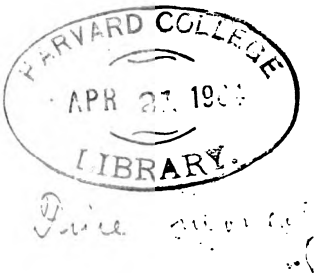
COMMANDER R.N.



LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1854.

Digitized by Google

Off 3158.54.3



Digitized by Google

LIST OF PLATES.

PLATE I. The High Street, Pera, and Turkish Women - - - *To face Title Page.*

II. Barracks, Scutari - - - „ page 99

III. Seraglio Point, from Tophana - „ - 305

IV. The outer floating bridge over the Golden Horn - 361

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

APOLOGIES for one's notions or one's nonsense, are simply absurd; but I would fain say a few words, not in extenuation of the errors and ignorances which will be found plentifully sprinkled in the following pages, but for the querulous, cynical tone which unamiably pervades the whole! in which I view things through the cold, clouded atmosphere of — an unusually severe winter; piqued by the peculiarly unEnglish comforts and contrivances of the Continent.

It will, however, be a variety, from its strong contrast to the invariable "*couleur de rose*" sunny pictures we have of France, Italy, and the East.

Now that I have returned home, I laugh quite as heartily as younger men at all the small miseries and mishaps we must get through, without wincing, in our wanderings about the world. They are exactly the ups and downs, and joltings out of our drawing-room and club easy chairs, we set out to — enjoy!

Digitized by Google

But that which I am more seriously concerned at is, what may be thought of the freedom of my strictures on men and things! The truth is, they were written under the more modest veil of the anonymous, and were meant to pass as impalpably harmless as the editorial *we* of a daily newspaper.

Mine was a careless—a too careless Diary, in which I thought aloud, — not calculating on the assuming and egotistic look it puts on now that I have been reluctantly obliged to subscribe a name to it — obscure, untitled, and unknown — and find myself at the foot of that crowded, critical, ticklish tribunal, of a fine, listless, indifferent, and unsympathetically fastidious West-end world!

But let me beware of prematurely making a fuss, like the duck in a puddle. I need not flatter myself with the idea of being particularly noticed in any way; but pass on in the stream of the last things out — *apropos* of the Turks and the Mediterranean.

THE AUTHOR.

London, September 22nd, 1854.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Page

Start from Piccadilly. — Bother with Cabs. — Pavilion, Folkestone. — Boulogne. — French Rail. — Paris. — French Drama. — New Rue de Rivoli. — Tour St. Jacques. — Rail to Chalons. — Fine young Lady. — Wretched Weather and Steamers down the Saone.— Lyons. - - - - - - 1

CHAP. II.

The Rhone. — Avignon. — Inland Sea of the Berre. — Marseilles.—Its Bastides and Cabanons.—Commerce. —Police Courts. — The People. — The Country.— Toulon.—The Dockyard and Port. - - - 37

CHAP. III.

Quit Toulon. — Draguinan. — Cannes. — Rich English and their Villas, including Lord Brougham's. — Antibes. — The Frontier of the Var. — Nice. - 88

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IV.

Page

To Genoa by the Cornice. — Look back at Nice. — Its Climate, Neglect, and Beggars.— Arrive at Genoa.— The King.— Consuls.— Fêtes.—Opera. — Review.— Regatta.— Start for Leghorn by Steamer. — Pisa by Rail.—On to Civita Vecchia.—Its Port.—Can't land without a Consul's Visa. — Appearance of the Coast. — Tipsy Engineer and sick Captain. — Stormy. — Ischia.— Bay of Naples. — Mole. — Landing at Custom House. — Naples. — Villa Reale. — Chaia. — Pompeii.— Baiæ.— Music.— Campo Santo.— Toledo. —Mole.—Opera.—Goats.—Europa Café.— Flowers. —Markets - - - - - - 129

CHAP. V.

Leave Naples in the Screw "Sorento."—Coast of Calabria. — Paulo. — Pizzo. — Band on Board. — Death of Murat. — Lipari Isles. — Stromboli. — Sicily. — Messina. — Industry. — Poverty. — Tyranny.—Two Hotels.— Marina. — Beautiful Site of City.—Reggio opposite. — Theatre. — Ruins of Earthquakes, and burnt Houses. — Soldiers. — Police. — Passports. — Good Gloves and bad Living. — Cycle of the Port and Citadel. — Hack Cabs. — Fish Market. — Women.—Weaving. — Trade. — Taormina. — Giardina. — Chain Barriers. — Cacti. — Etna appears. — Aci-reale. — Catania. — Coronna d'Oro. — Placido. — Greek Therme.—Biscari's.—Lava. — Speronaros.— Scarcity. — Padre Guardo - - - - 226

CHAP. VI.

Leave Catania in Post Diligence. — Cross the Plain and

Digitized by Google

Page

River. — Leontinum. — Etna follows! — Syracuse. — Albergo del Sole. — Temples of Ceres and Minerva. — Washerwomen in Arethusa's Bath. — Jack Robinson and Sons. — Embark. — Schooner "Cassiopeia." — Skipper. — Conjuror. — Cape Passero. — Calms. — Malta. — Hotels. — Troops. — Transports. — St. John's. — Good Friday. — Religious Ceremonies and Processions. — Theatres. — Cafés. — Ices. — Mids. — Palace. — Clean Streets. — Leave in "Arabian." — Horses. — Mule. — Goats' Milk. — Dogs. — Revolver Practice and Rifle. — Pass Cape Matapan. — Snow-capped Mountains of Greece. — Siro. — Mytilene. — Archipelago. — Tenedos - - - - 261

CHAP. VII.

Pera. — Our Camp at Scutari. — The great Cemetery. — Happy Flocks. — A wet Review. — The Sultan's Palaces. — Abdul-Medjid at Mosque. — Good-natured Turks. — Above the Bridges. — Unknown Tongues. — Galata Grog-shops. — Dress of our Army. — Pera Gates shut. — Christians in the Saddle. — Sight-seeing Firman. — Old Palace and Mosques. — Sultan's Stud. — Pages, Baths, Library. — Ladies' Garden. — View from Windows. — Our queer Dresses. — Library and Bed. — Armories. — Mosques. — St. Sophia. — Idle Intrusion. — Massive Walls. — Kitchen Clock. — Atmeidan. — Sacred Pigeons. — Mahmoud's Mausoleum. — Slave Markets. — Banished Greeks. — General Apathy - - - - - 285

CHAP. VIII.

Turkish Women in Steamers. — Turkish Economy. — Lodging-Houses. — Jews' Cemetery. — Downs. —

Digitized by Google

Page

Sweet Waters.—Ideal Happiness. — Constitutions. — Local Comparisons.— One Banker one Shop.— Burnt Street. — Horses.— Burnouses. — Crowded Solitude. — Cocks and Hens. — Moslem Rule. — Idle Visions. — Turks mystified. — Sterile Environs. — Reform Act. — Odd Pachas. — Modern Turkish Army. — Complicated War. — Dilatory Movements. — Water-side Scenes. — Caïque Fares. — Extent of Pera. — Puzzling Currency. — Delicacy of the Caïques. — Tophana Ferry. — Build of Boats - - - 319

CHAP. IX.

Pera's Hills and Outlets. — Dervishes Kiosk. — Burnt Tree.— Bird's-eye View.— Consolatory Comparisons. — Passages Homewards. — Queer Volunteers. — Letters essential. — Way up to Pera. — Turkish Traits. — Details of Pera. — A Lobster Bargain. — Greek and Turkish Women. — Austrian Ball. — Task in Music. — Pera the West End. — National Garbs. — Women with our Army. — Pleasant Companions. — Nothing known. — Scanty Supplies. — Landscape Attractions. — Silly Curiosity. — Hot Sun, cold Winds. — Treacherous Kindness. — Quit Stamboul. — Confusion at Starting. — Hadjis' Reception. — Salt water Amenity. — Consular Forts. — Call at Smyrna. — Look of the town. — Imperative Backshish. —Self-exiled Ladies - - - - 34

CHAP. X.

Leave Smyrna. — Islands. — Anchor at Alexandria. — The Shipping. — Town Light-house. — Palace. —

Digitized by Google

Page

Pacha. — Donkey Boys. — Café Exchange Rooms. — Square of Hotels. — Bazaar. — Canal. — Pillar and Needle. — Load with Cotton. — And cram with Passengers. — Start for Malta. — Coal. — On to Gibraltar. — Silent Changes. — Spain. — Passage Home. — A Word on Ships and Steamers - - - 379

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

GLEANINGS

FROM

PICCADILLY TO PERA.

CHAPTER I.

START FROM PICCADILLY. — BOTHER WITH CABS. — PAVILION, FOLKESTONE. — BOULOGNE. — FRENCH RAIL. — PARIS. — FRENCH DRAMA. — NEW RUE DE RIVOLI. — TOUR ST. JACQUES. — RAIL TO CHALONS. — FINE YOUNG LADY. — WRETCHED WEATHER AND STEAMERS DOWN THE SOANE. — LYONS.

I AM leaving town — already "the air bites shrewdly" but it is fine, and the sun struggles bravely towards nine o'clock, to get through the mass of housemaids' fires and factory clouds of this whole county of brick, London. I am midway in Hyde Park, near the barracks of the Horse Guards, and yet I might as well be in Thames Street for smoke and blacks.

I send for a cab, and make an effort to be off in time for the South Eastern Railway express, "twelve hours

Digitized by Google

to Paris;" but we are a lazy late people, up late at both ends of the day; so, no cabs are on the stands, except by chance, at eight o'clock in the morning: but with us every thing is left to chance — the rule of thumb, and glorious uncertainty; as the fares are, when you do get into a cab. Who is to decide as to a "fair quantity of luggage" between you and Cabby? or when you have got to the end of a mile in our labyrinth of streets? and how can a man have the heart to take a cab even within the mile (if he is knowing) for sixpence?

What could have been more simple and efficacious than to have followed the French plan, — so much the *course*, so much the *hour?* As to the greater distances "on the stones," London, might simply have been divided in half at Charing Cross, or Temple Bar; or say, as a limit for cabs, not *more* than three miles east or west, north or south; not that that would be unfair, even as far as our streets (numbered) go, for, if in a "*course*" you go but fifty yards, you pay the same thing; as, by the hour, you must reckon on going slow enough. This would end all disputes and heartburns, and *injustices*, for very often, after all, the cabmen are sometimes dealt hardly by; as in an instance lately of two ladies and the Hammersmith magistrate who condemned a cabman to a month's prison for saying to the ladies, "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves" for giving only sixpence (for two!). Who will say it was not ab-

Digitized by Google

surdly too little, however lawful? But is a man to be put in prison for ill-manners, or mere insolence of words, however improper or annoying?

It is certainly, I think, very unjust, very un-English. This is the way we make vindictive scamps, and fill our prisons. Magistrates sit to administer (seldom judiciously!) imbecile, mischievous laws, making our mob worse, and our burthens greater!

My cabman (at last, by the half-past nine train) did not dispute my reasonable quantum of luggage (a portmanteau), and seemed content with half-a-crown, which I knew was sixpence if not a shilling over his fare, for I doubt whether it is more than *three* miles from the barracks, Knightsbridge, to the London Bridge Station: but to avoid disputes, and pay for the trouble of putting in and out one's luggage, 'tis better to pay too much than too little; but this system, which we all fall into, "makes calamity of so long life." It is our "*public*" which ruins and imposes on the public. Each individual will be more generous and magnificent than the last, under the dreadful apprehension of being "no gentleman!" or, what is even worse, having a long dispute, ending, perhaps, with a police officer.

We turn at the preposterous right angle below the Red Hill Station, and down the Weald of Kent. The country looks still beautiful; O land of my fathers! where see such another, no matter what country! but

Digitized by Google

Kent is charming: look at the oaks and walks about Tunbridge Wells, and all the *show places!*

The fields are dry and smiling; last autumn all this track was under water (along the Medway), and even some of the crops floating about! Our farmers are very slow, and rather slovenly. I see a field ploughing with four horses on end, pulling at one another: was ever any thing so stupid, so slow, so un-economical! Landlords should pinch their tenants less. Our small farmers are as poor as day labourers, with the added anxiety!

What a difference the sunshine makes in every thing! how beautiful these hills and downs about Folkstone! and the viaduct across its pretty little valley and stream. A new and large town has already started up about the old church on the west cliff, and many families in the genteel world already acknowledge this late smuggling and fishing village as a watering place, more than a match for Sandgate, two miles beyond.

Indeed, the whole town is mending daily, and improving in spite of the lord of the manor — streets building, shops getting richer, smarter. The harbour belongs to the railway company (bought out and out, of the town, for 37,000*l.*); the rail crosses the harbour by a pivot bridge, straight to the pier, and you step out in the water-side station, close to the steamers: the whole with the custom-house adjoining is extremely well arranged. The steamers alone are, as to size and ca-

Digitized by Google

pacity, out of date; puff them as they may (all round our coast) as "splendid," "magnificent," &c. Our steamers are every where sadly behindhand, still on the sharp, *deep*, narrow, plan. They want breadth, size, and capacity in every way; they might be much larger, wider, flatter floored, and, by drawing less water, go faster. They ought to go over to Boulogne in an hour and a half, if only twenty-seven miles; but they stick to "two hours" as a great triumph, and not that in any sea; in a word, they are not good sea boats, nor fit for our "still-vexed" channel. This absurd sort of narrow sharp build was carried to an imbecile excess in the "*Wave Queen*," a most dangerous boat; she would have gone down off Newhaven a year ago, had they been unable to run her on shore!

I go to the *Pavilion*—the well-known hotel. "The Times" has, perhaps, done some little good by its attack on hotel charges, but, after all, nothing is changed materially; the charges are much as in all first-rate hotels. There is a *table-d'hôte* at half-past two; we had an excellent dinner—soups, fish, flesh, and fowl in variety, and dessert: certainly a much better dinner, better cooked, and better served, than at any hotel in Boulogne, perhaps in France, at 2*s.* 6*d.* All the arrangements and the whole house are admirable; great order, regularity, and civility; a noble coffee-room, reading, and billiard-room; bedrooms and sit-

Digitized by Google

ting-rooms, along the great corridors of the wings, excellent in every way; with twenty essentials, and even luxuries, not known on the Continent: so, let us not grumble at paying some 10*s.* or 12*s.* a day; the servants, apart, 1*s.* a day, except the first day, 1*s.* 6*d.*,—to families, much less; and people may live at the hotel at greatly reduced rate, if for any time. Some families are staying here on this economical scale, having the run of all the luxuries and comforts of this vast establishment. The old men snap up the papers as fast as they arrive (in the reading-room), and not quite content with the ordinary at half-past two, which is so uncommonly good, dine alone at six or seven, and lunch on the Danube of "The Times."

The walks here are delightful; the valley under the viaduct on the east cliffs, and downs; and nearer, on the west cliff, where fine expensive villas already range for a quarter of a mile, and are still prolonging. The road with a notice, "private," goes up the face of the cliff, from the street gate of the Pavilion, and is a good constitutional breather, preparatory: one meets dashing, handsome girls, linked in twos and threes, with an occasional stray beau; but alas! the supply falls short. How many of our charming lilies and roses "waste their sweetness on the desert (watering-places) air!"—at last, any sort of two-legged animal is welcome.

There is a planked promenade at the end of the pier,

Digitized by Google

close to the little lighthouse, where all the Folkestone world promenade; particularly of a Sunday evening, it is crowded.

Coals and stone are unloading from two or three brigs, the first at 22*s.* the ton, "best;" in London, we may well growl at its being 32*s.* In vain "The Times" inserts complaining letters of "Paterfamilias," and cuts up that abomination, the corporation of London; all our anomalies and nuisances go on as a matter of course from year to year — who will outlive them?

The fishing-boats are coming in with herrings to their homes all round the north face of the harbour. This, and the whistling engines backwards and forwards across the pivot-bridge, give some life to the scene: the town in its little valley, the cliffs on each side, and the fine downs and hills beyond, including the viaduct, are altogether very rich and picturesque.

I slept delightfully in the western wing; how good the sleeping-rooms are—all so clean, so handsome! The bright moon shed her last soft rays on my curtains; the day has been beautiful and calm, but towards morning the surf on the beach began to murmur, and the wind whistled down the chimney; still fine, however.

Saturday, November 19th. — Unless a man were counting his minutes, I would not advise going to Paris in "twelve hours." You must get up very

Digitized by Google

early — be at extra trouble — and you arrive at eleven o'clock at night in Paris instead of half-past eight, that is, fourteen hours and a half. But you may indeed walk about Boulogne streets, or dine; as though you may get there by two o' clock P. M. the same day, you do not start by the train till five o'clock. I dined with some of the fast travellers; we had a fine but rather rough passage, which put one in mind how much we want larger and swifter boats. Why are we to be for ever behind our good go a-head cousins? we were two hours and a half crossing; a good hour too much. While walking the deck, I tried to get into chat with a triton of the minnows, a naval commander, but this big man shook me off; great personages cannot be too cautious,— we carry this rule down to very small fry indeed. Instead of hurrying on uncomfortably with the flock of fast sheep, I went to the theatre to see an opera (Galatea), and two clever one-act pieces, in which the French so much excel,— things we transplant and spoil. The singing and acting both good; the music very difficult, without being at all charming. Most of us have seen Handel's Galatea — this is a very funny affair: Pygmalion is indeed very much in earnest (a good barytone, and splendid man); but the statue, when she steps off her pedestal, is thin, ugly, and very self-willed, drinks a great deal of wine, and will fall in love only with her lover's slave Ganymede, a very lazy

Digitized by Google

fellow, who sings a capital yawning, sleepy song. Midas, who comes to buy the statue, gets laughed at, as "*trop vieux et trop laid*," loses his jewels to the lady, who is running off with them and her sleepy choice, when the terrible "artiste" catches them; then comes a clever quartett, and the offended sculptor, to punish her, replaces her once more, cold marble, on her pedestal.

They kept us till near midnight, a rare thing in French country towns; but what should engage our especial notice, is the handsome way such things are done in France, not like our starved, mean, miserable country town theatres. There were thirty musicians, all good, in the orchestra; the theatre itself, large and handsome; the seats commodious, clean, soft—such as a lady well dressed requires; much better than even at our Princess's or Lyceum, or indeed any of our best theatres in town, where one finds all sorts of hard, dirty, green baize contrivances, in narrow close benches, to pack people at the very maximum of profit and discomfort, boxes and all. We certainly are as fond of music and the drama as the French, but in these grand essentials we improve very, very slowly. Of course every thing is comparative; we are less ridiculously absurd than forty or fifty years ago—something less contemptible; but another wise provision in France is the sum every town pays to assist the respectability, at least, of its theatre. Bou-

Digitized by Google

logne pays 12,000 fr., and the richer inhabitants take boxes by the year; this is true wisdom. In Paris, the government, very properly, always supports three or four of the leading theatres, thus insuring a certain excellence, and does not leave such things to penniless adventurers,—the vulgar, the tasteless, the ignorant,—as with us. It is truly a national concern; it has much to do with our working mob; but when shall we take our "genteel mob" who spoil every thing, into training.

Besides the lengthened chain you bear along with you of a passport every where to be viewed, from the moment one sets foot in France one feels no longer quite at liberty. On landing you are rigidly passed along between the ropes, and penned up in the searching-room of the custom-house like culprits. Ladies, however weak or delicate, still ill, it may be, and faint from sea-sickness, all, even their children, are sternly driven in and kept in — often very long; while all the stronger push towards the passport and searching counter, where three or four clerks and a commissaire inexorably sit and demand your passport — where your wrapper, your overcoat, even your pockets are searched (*felt*). Ladies' small reticules do not escape. If you cannot open whatever you have in your hand instantly, it is taken from you and added to a heap of small boxes, bundles, and carpet-bags which you have brought on shore. All trunks and larger parcels

Digitized by Google

are now charged a franc each, and you must return to the baggage-room or send your keys by the commissionaire for the further search of your trunks, often very vexatiously done, things unpacked, and thrust back anyhow — they are not even as civil in manner as our own searchers.

All this is an old story, but in a long series of amicable years nothing of this senseless and disgusting vexation is relaxed.—Well, if we will travel, all this must be expected, and a store of meekness and philosophy laid in for the journey, together with an unusually heavy purse.

I went to a small and rather comfortable hotel on the quay, where they charged me within a very trifle of as much as they did at the Pavilion, with a much worse dinner. Boulogne is crammed full of hotels to accommodate, us English especially. They reckon about five thousand living constantly in the town; of course in all the best houses and apartments. Indeed, for the last forty years Boulogne has been enormously enriched by us English, and so far from any thanks for it, we it is who are looked on as the obliged.

November 20th. — The first class French railway carriages are much more elegantly and comfortably fitted up than ours; even the second class is well cushioned and comfortable, and the fare not half what ours is — first class but 28 fr. (1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*) to Paris, some 160 miles. They

Digitized by Google

give us *chaufpieds* (long flat iron heaters) under our feet, in addition to very comfortable sheepskins;—the heaters (the day so cold) changed at Amiens, where the train stops twenty minutes, and passengers breakfast or dine as they please.

I ran off across the "Boulevard de l'Est" to have a look at the beautiful cathedral, almost a mile off from the "*Gare*" (station). A few miles on at Longeau we are shunted and backed, and wait for the Lille train, which is added to us. Sometimes the Boulogne passengers are obliged to change carriages here. Just here the country is very flat and wet, with long ponds or pieces of still water,—thence the name. The meadows are covered by cloth, bleaching; and heaps of black peat contrast with the white cloth spread out in long lines on the green.

Starting at half-past ten A. M. from Boulogne, we arrive in Paris by five exactly, as promised, going along the whole way very quietly and steadily, about twenty-five miles the hour; the track up the valley of the Lianne from Boulogne, through a tunnel under the hills below *Pontbrique*, and along the lower sea levels of the estuaries and small rivers of Montreuil and Abbeville; where it strikes off to Amiens, coming in on the Oise at Beaumont, and along its banks by L'Isle Adam and Pontoise; all this country, as one approaches Paris (on the Oise), is very rich and pretty, full of villages,

Digitized by Google

farms, and vineyards, which are first noticed towards Creille and Beaumont: further north they hardly answer.

At the station in Paris (just below Montmartre) your trunks are searched again,— not so rigidly, mine was not opened — but why searched at all? —to see if you have not by chance a goose, a shoulder of veal, or any eatable thing, paying *octroi*, stowed away. Luckily we foreigners are not so much suspected of this kind of economy; but how absurd and vexatious for the French!

Our passports were not once asked for, *à la bonne heure!* I meant to have had a cabriolet, but an officious porter shouldered my trunk, and forced me into an omnibus, a "*spécialité*," to Meurice's Hotel, where it drove into the court, and I paid a franc, but a citadine would have taken me much better and quicker for the same coin; besides, I had to pay this officious, ticketed, uniformed porter for handing up my luggage, as the railway contrive not to do it by their own employés.

In this we are more liberal, and our porters are *extremely* attentive. I suspect they rather expect a small souvenir, though it is most expressly forbidden; in short, travellers *will* break through the best rules, no matter about what, and victimise each other.

Monday 21st.— I am as much at home in Paris as

Digitized by Google

London. I am sorry to say here I have been doubly ruined, by misfortune and by idleness, and lost all the better chances in life, in a worldly sense. Its streets, its hotels, and its people, how often have I seen changed! I saunter along the Boulevards, or along the new street de Rivoli opened now out to the ("Napoleon") barracks, just beyond the Hôtel de Ville. It is like the shifting scenes of a theatre; one sits a melancholy spectator at last, and about as comfortable and pleased as when the play draws to its close in the last scene, of a cold or wet night, you begin to draw on your great coat.

One must not talk of Paris, every body knows all about it. Coming along (already this new street is crowded with carriages, traffic, and people, even more, as a thoroughfare, than the Boulevards), I stopped a moment to admire the tower of St. Jacques: it is very beautiful even in its dingy dilapidated state, like some long-lost jewel just disinterred. They will soon repair and brighten it up, so as to be in keeping with the façades of the street.

I have just come from a grand musical festival in aid of the Philanthropic Society of Musicians of the Imperial Academy of Music. The band of ninety performers and all the singers assisted; the music Cherubini's. The entrance to this treat only a franc, taken within the church of St. Roch, for the best places and seats. Those who could not or would not pay, still

Digitized by Google

entered; only kept outside certain barriers. Towards the end the lady patronesses made a separate collection in velvet purses (the *quête*) for the widows.

O how is the soul moved, rapt, at these grand, sweet, solemn strains, within these noble domes, these hallowed precincts, and amidst this pious, attentive crowd! For me it was too much: tears betray a still-recurring anguish —

> "Whisper the
> O'erfraught heart and bid it break."

Would that I could forget—Forget! such heartaches cannot be forgotten. The worst of living long,—beyond, far beyond the ills flesh is heir to,—is losing those we love—nay, even our tolerable friends and acquaintance. Often of late years those beautiful lines haunt me—

> "Time, which steals something from us every day,
> At last it steals us from ourselves away."

There was a grand mass at the same time at St. Eustache, no doubt crowded as much as at St. Roch. All such things are admirably arranged and conducted in France; no vulgar violence, no squeezing, pushing, or scrambling; every body behaves with an earnest, silent, quiet decency. But if it were not so, it would be enforced by the gentlemen of the parish, in full dress, wearing a chain; others with blue and silver bows and staves, with the beadles and vergers "*en grande tenue.*"

Digitized by Google

This is rather the dull season, the court being at Fontainbleau, and the weather cold and sombre. It wants the sun and the carriages of the *beau monde*, to set off the life of a great metropolis; trooping the guard too on the Place Carousel, and the music of a morning, is missed; so is the service at the Imperial Chapel at the Château, of a Sunday morning, as under the Bourbons. But the evenings are very gay, what with the countless crowded restaurants, and cafés, and theatres, all brilliantly lit up; so many arcades and bazaars, forming promenades just before and after six o'clock (the great Parisian dinner hour).

There is a new bazaar, called "the European," in the Passage Geoffroy, opposite the panorama on the Boulevard de Gand, just opened, with a good many useful novelties of every possible description; and a new restaurant, called "Diners de Paris," where two courses, dessert, and a bottle of wine, all unusually good, are given for three francs, five sous (2*s.* 8½*d.*), so it is crammed to suffocation; like a new play, every body *about town* must go once at least.—In the same way it is with a five-act drama at the Gymnase, of young Dumas, entitled "Diane de lys," creating a perfect furor; happy those who can pounce on a vacant pit stall at eight francs, which I had to pay (the ordinary price about half).

The prodigious interest of this piece is derived, perhaps, chiefly from the inimitable acting of *Rose cherie*

Digitized by Google

and *Bressant;* but all the actors are excellent, and the natural ease and *ensemble* perfect. The thing itself, which ends in the husband shooting the lover dead on the stage! — not in a duel, which he disdains, as beneath him, with a painter — is of that kind which cannot well be transplanted to our soil. It is indeed extremely powerful; one might have heard a pin drop,—every body breathless now and then. The moral, however, quite false, even absurd; but it comes home to men's bosoms and business here, thence the secret.

This young Dumas, like his father, revels in strange and extravagant ideas, with an overweening vanity, supported by great dramatic effect; but very false and mischievous. He wrote "*La Dame aux Camelias*" to exalt the *Lorettes!* and now he writes this to pull down women of rank and station!

The somewhat stale clap-trap laudation of nobleness in low life, and extraordinary merit, pride, and delicacy in "*artistes*" with sensitive souls, peeps out rather crude, in this as in most of the popular pieces of late years — we have tried it; but it becomes a bore, and is indeed a most flimsy conclusion.

The wonder of Paris for the moment, the prolonged Rue de Rivoli, ends at the handsome new barracks, Napoleon, behind the Hôtel de Ville. Many of the shops are opened and houses finished, but it will take another year to complete it. The immense masses of

Digitized by Google

houses, the old Rue de Chatres, &c., in front of the Palais Royal, are all swept off, and they are now pulling down the whole block, on to the Rue St. Louis, and Nicaise, where the great Napoleon (then First Consul), was nearly stopped, by the infernal machine, going to the Théâtre Français. To the Rue St. Honoré, and opposite the public passages across under the Louvre, many of these immense houses are quite new, or recently redecorated as restaurants, cafés, &c.; but nothing stops the Imperial edict, and this most useful embellishment of the capital.

The tower of St. James is very fine; it stands rather in the way of the line of the street, and will be all the more conspicuous: many interesting and curious stories are attached to it, for which see guide books; it must be 200 feet high. I try to give some faint idea of this Tour St. Jacques: I tried to sketch it at the opposite corner board inclosures.

All along half the way is still encumbered by the stones, plaster, &c. of the old streets, and the still strong solid rafters and beams of the floors now sawing up, with the notice "Bois à bruler."

All our papers have rung the changes on hotel charges of late, ending with "Punch's" smartness; with comparisons between ours and those of the Continent; but if one takes into account the miserable discomfort of French or Italian hotels, and the greater cheapness of

Digitized by Google

their countries in every possible item, I really think our own the most moderate, the least unconscionable. Here is *Meurices:* one gets a dark, tile-floor'd, small bedroom, half lit and aired (with abominable smells), on the small dark court; and as uncomfortable, uncarpeted a coffee room, and no sitting room whatever, unless you take a very expensive one. In fifty years' intimacy with our wants and ways, the French still neither care for, nor indeed understand, that one cannot read or write in a cold *salle-à-manger* with the tables always laid, no carpet, no privacy, no any thing we think essential. We pay a little less indeed for some things; but if you dine here it costs at least 8 or 10 fr., 5 fr. for dinner alone, and any tolerable wine as much more; the "ordinaire" is sad stuff, and you cannot have half a bottle: thus your dinner is 8 or 10 fr., some wines ridiculously expensive; Laffitte or champagne, and not the best after all, often excessively bad.

In short, avarice and meanness are the ruling contrivances at all hotels all over the world; but at home they cannot venture on the *sang froid* assurance of the Continent; where you are neither smiled on nor made much of, as with us. Restaurants are even more extravagant: my share in a party some years ago, at the Rocher de Cancale, for a very quiet dinner (no champagne), and not a very good one either, was 38 fr.! At

Digitized by Google

the "*Maison Dorée*" now, or the "*Trois Frères,*" the reckoning is enormous.

One should not be later, if going south down the Rhone, than September. It freezes, and all inevitable discomforts of travel are made real sufferings. French railway carriages are, however, very handsome, roomy, and comfortable;—to-day without *chaufrettes*, however, and our feet very cold, to Chalons on the Saone; the fare 39 fr. 2 sous first class. We start at half-past ten, and get there by nine at night, dining at Dijon at six; so dark, nothing could be seen of the town or surrounding country, as we thread the valleys of the Seine and Yonne. About Tonnere it gets hilly and more picturesque, but this is not a very hilly or interesting track. Murray describes it, and was often referred to. We were all English except one young Frenchman, who kept his eyes pretty constantly fixed on an "honourable" young lady, who gave herself small exclusive airs towards us English as nobodies. This excessively provoked a fat Devonshire lady, not particularly in the high world, who was very curious to know who this little contemptuous girl could be, with her valet, her maid, and fond papa! Lord ———, going on a visit to his friend Lord Brougham at Cannes.

There was another little episode which set me to thinking on the not very good-natured peculiarity of our manners. The noble lord sat next Sir ———, M. P.

Digitized by Google

for———; one of those *ci-devant* parliamentary friends no doubt our ministers find it very essential to be civil to. They chatted away together on the most friendly footing, without the M.P.'s taking the slightest notice of the young lady, who sat silent immediately opposite and touching him. He was not introduced; and so he left them. When gone, she asked her father, in that sort of tone only understood among ourselves, "Who is that man?" All this is nothing, yet something; it lets one see that supercilious affectation, which goes on increasing up to the throne; taken up and dropt in the most capricious way, according to the momentary figure and power of individuals. Let us not talk of the trifling and insincerity of the French; we certainly are the most trifling, inconsistent people on earth, in our higher circles, certainly. Yet I can well conceive that, entirely free from the fear of sliding downwards, nothing can be more charming, or more easy, or more luxurious, than our most exclusive circle, nothing more simple, true, and noble; so entirely free from silly affectations and restraints; but this must be quite among *themselves*. After all, this contemptible and insulting pretension is much more bearable in our really high people, than in that second set, our smaller gentry, and still worse in that other supercilious, conceited set, the writers of novels on our manners, whose affectation and airs become infinitely more disgusting; who are the

Digitized by Google

very people that keep up this childish up-turning of noses, without that high breeding which rather softens it in our nobility; who are eternally talking of "snobs," themselves the very greatest; "fooling" those above them, "to the top o' the bent." But I fear we are one and all a nation of snobs, so prone are we to worship any sort of title which carries with it a fine house in town and country, fine carriages, and fine dinners.

The *snob* papers in "Punch" quiz those unfortunates who attempt to get into the circle above them by giving dinners they cannot afford, to be accepted by even poor titled people as a monstrous favour! The thing is susceptible of being made ridiculous enough; one cannot help laughing at the small accompaniment of agonising distresses; but to be cut by the very people you would fain honour and court, begging their good will and kindness on your knees, is sharper than the serpent's tooth. The best of the joke is, that these very "Punch" writers include themselves among the high and mighty, asked to Major So and So's, or Mrs. Colonel or General Blankcartridge's ball or "tea *dansante*."

The really high world, with us, read all this, and have acted occasionally the cutting part; but to see it carried out downwards into the society of writers, editors, "*artistes*," and the smallest pretenders to gentility, seems indeed the very acme of imbecility. Can one wonder

Digitized by Google

the lower world, always aping, always pretending, should be treated like spaniels, at least they deserve it.

We dine very well at Dijon, 3 fr. a head and the *garçon*. As we get towards the wine country, Burgundy, &c., wine is not charged apart; a bottle of ordinaire is put between two, and very ordinary it is.

They kept us an unconscionable time at the Chalons station, packing us in omnibuses, bag and baggage, and we were driven about to various hotels. I would not go to the "*Park*," because it was one of the advertised and puffed ones, but slept at the "*Three Pheasants*" opposite, on the quay of the Saone, here a fine rapid river. What the "*Park*" may be I know not, but let nobody venture on the *Pheasants Three*. I had a damp bed, and miserable breakfast in a dark, dank guinguette of a brick floored room, smelling of smoke and wine, with every thing dirty and of the worst sort.

Of a cold night the constant *Carreau* of this country (tiled floors) and a damp bed, complete any other misery of baggage or 'buses. I here caught a severe cold in my head, of all things most inconvenient travelling. It is never of any use asking if your bed is well aired, the sheets dry? The "*Basin noire*" only brought out the latent humidity, and I had Hobson's choice.

I observe our knowing travellers go about with a perfect load of coats, shawls, and woollen coverings, strapped in immense bundles, which they have to lug

Digitized by Google

about, adding to their other inevitable small troubles; but before I got rid of the cold weather I was obliged to confess one could not have too much wool to put on, however troublesome to lug about.

At Chalons, though flat near this town (on the right bank of the Saone), the spurs of the Jura and the Alps are seen, and we find it much colder than at Paris. Next morning it snowed furiously; no depth of winter at Nova Zembla could be worse; and thus we had to embark at ten o'clock in the last of the three steamboats which start of a morning at five, at seven, and at ten. Of all the modern stupid contrivances on water, commend me to a French river steamer; much in the shape of a long horse-trough, so long as hardly to be turned in the river, so narrow that you cannot stir on deck or swing a cat in the cabins, so high and top-heavy that they would infallibly upset at once were it not for the paddle-wheels.

Of course in such weather all rushed to the cabin, where we were packed like herrings, the side seats barely leaving a passage to pass clear of the legs and feet of the sitters; this was the chief cabin, which certainly vied in villainous discomfort and cram with the *salle-à-manger* before it, where half our live cargo betook themselves, and where every body set to work "*à la fourchette*," and "*à la carte*."

I made a merit of necessity; and, giving up my most

Digitized by Google

valuable cold seat (jammed between two bearded, Burnous'd Frenchmen) to a handsome young English married lady, was overwhelmed by thanks I little deserved. Snowing all day, and boxed up in this way, who would talk of the river or the scenery, of the various towns and vine-covered hills we passed to Macon and on to Lyons; but even when I am delighted with landscapes on sunny days, or combinations of the sublime or beautiful, I shall rarely inflict descriptions on the gentle readers I hope to have; or with past histories of castles, countries, and cities. Such things deserve a particular study, are known sufficiently to most intelligent people; and besides, there are scores of books, particularly Murray's, Bradshaw's, &c., in every body's hands.

Towards the evening it holds up; we creep on deck a little in spite of the cold; the scenery, one can see, is growing more and more grand as we approach the hills which border the Saone in its downward course,—hills covered with vines, the "*Côte rotie*," &c.

We arrive at Lyons in the dark, and make fast at a kind of working pavilion of a custom-house on the right bank of the Saone just above the stone bridge, where the river falls in rapids, being low, over its rocky bed in the suburb about opposite the centre of the city. Here we were delayed an hour, in most admired confusion, scrambling and squabbling in the freezing air over the hold of the vessel, and only hindering each

Digitized by Google

other trying to get our luggage; the unhappy gentlemen of many ladies and many trunks were to be most pitied.

There seemed no sort of regulation whatever; the crowd mixed with porters packed and struggling in the dark to get a sight of the shape of each box, trunk, or bag as they were slowly handed up on deck.

Luckily in this country, however dirty, rough, or uncivil, there is no swell mob, no wilful mistakes; so, after an hour's misery, each got his things carried to the "*douane*," where we were only asked if we had any thing "*à déclarer*," and allowed to pass on to the omnibuses (drawn up at each station). When seated, we had to wait patiently another half hour while the last trunk of the last traveller was put on the roof, enough to break any ordinary omnibuses down; and we are driven across the bridge, and on across the *Belle Cour* Square, the fashionable or west end, to the quays on the Rhone side of the city.

I made a bad choice in going to the Hôtel de Gênes, (strongly recommended by a touter on board), which I found was rather a commercial Traiteur's, occupying the *entresol* of a noble house certainly. Here the landlady and *Bonne* were drying and ironing linen at the dining tables; most of the passengers were dropt at other hotels on the way, particularly one nearly opposite, the Hôtel de l'Europe; but it is the custom at most of the hotels

Digitized by Google

to have a restaurant and *table-d'hôte* in the same room and at the same hour,—as you come south.

Lyons is a magnificent city, and its situation grand. The houses on the river's sides along the quays are mostly, as in the chief streets and squares, six and seven stories high, looking, indeed, more rich and handsome than on the Paris quays. But to have a clear idea of the grandeur, extent, and beauty of the whole city and landscape, one must recross the Saone over one of the centre bridges (there are ten over the Saone, and six over the Rhone), and go up the hilly suburb immediately above the Cathedral of St. John's;—by the bye, cross directly opposite, over the handsome stone bridge leading from the Place de Belle Cour. The way is tortuous and dirty enough upwards, up narrow, ill-paved streets among the weavers, and under, as you ascend, immense high old walls, backs of convents, and hospitals. Through a terraced garden they have made a short cut recently, up to the church of Nôtre Dame; the gilt statue (colossal) of the Virgin Mary shines conspicuous, crowning the spire. You pay a sou at the gate, and ascend to the upper terrace of the garden, where you take breath, and behold, looking eastward over the rivers, the city and the near and distant mountains—a view rich and magnificent in the extreme. It was cloudy, and there was some smoke from the numerous factories (for already there is an immense deal of coal burnt here), so

Digitized by Google

that I could not see all quite so well as on a clearer day. The hills following the Saone down on both sides, break off on the east side, and range across the northern suburbs over to the right bank of the Rhone, leaving a four or five mile tongue of level land, on which the body of the city stands between these fine rivers: not that it occupies the whole space; below the town, to the confluence of the rivers, there is still a space of a mile or two occupied by gardens, factories, and building yards, &c., but these near hills are covered by villas and terraced gardens, forts, citadels, arsenals, convents, churches—indeed the right bank of the Saone is a densely populated suburb of the town, forming, as it recedes above and below, the most beautiful feature as you walk along the streets or quays. The suburbs across the Rhone to the east, and the country beyond, are flat and less attractive. I fancy few of us travellers ever cross the old stone bridge of the *Gillotière*. Almost all the sixteen bridges are suspension; all very neat and handsome, of wire rope, looking much lighter than ours, probably are even stronger; loaded waggons cross most of them. The lowest down over both rivers, in a direct line and across the south-west end of the town, are among the most recent improvements. They are named, in compliment to the emperor, Cour et Pont Napoleon. In a centre square forming here, they have just erected a fine equestrian statue of the Great Napoleon.

Digitized by Google

Nothing in French cities is more apparent than this rapid improvement in every possible way of late years, —new streets, public buildings, bridges, municipal arrangements for the public good, gardens, pavements, roads of the environs,—in spite of all their internal troubles and ephemeral governments. It would appear only to have tended to one end—to make them richer and stronger in every way as a nation than they ever were. As to their increased budget and taxes, they are at least equal and inevitable, and are, after all, a trifle compared with ours.

The body of the town, its two great squares (*Belle Cour* and *Terreaux*), and its great arteries, the quays, the streets "*Bourbon*" and "St. Dominique," and central, north, and south, across the Place Belle Cour to the Place Terreaux north, south to the new "Place Napoleon," are soon mastered. They are the arteries, the great thoroughfares of the body of the place; an intricate maze of narrow streets the sun hardly penetrates even in midsummer.

There are about 16,000 troops in garrison here, and the place is governed by their general, (at present the prefecture is vacant). Just now it is Marshal Castellane, a tall thin old soldier, who in full dress uniform generally walks up and down near the band in the midst of the crowd on the Belle Cour. He wears six or seven stars and numerous clasps and crosses on his breast, quite a

Digitized by Google

cuirass of shining honours. He was on his usual promenade on Sunday, taking his hat off at every half dozen steps to return salutes, and stopping occasionally to speak to gentlemen and ladies of his acquaintance.

This sort of parade (not but that his carriage appeared perfectly easy and free from affectation) may have its uses politically, but the go-ahead "*jeune France*" have very little respect for those in authority.

The young Commis, who thought "que mademoiselle avait de beaux yeux et une belle chevelure" (the honourable little Miss who left us at Dijon), and who I met again on the Place, observed with a shrug, "tout cela me fait pitié!"

It was Sunday: the band (of one of the regiments) consisted of about sixty, and played very fairly: I could not but think of the difference between us and the French in this. Here is a strictly economical French regiment, has its music in this full handsome way; and the equal and sensible orders of *their* Horse Guards make it a pleasure the meanest may enjoy, far above the caprice of colonels or lieut.-colonels. On their promenades, as the day and hour fixed comes—so does the band, no matter what garrison, or if only one regiment present. The contrast may not be so violent with our regiments of the line; but with our Guards, and in London, of all places in the world! who but must look back with regret and contempt at their airs, and their

Digitized by Google

turn-out of some *twenty* or two dozen, when they *do* condescend to play to our admiring crowds during the season in Kensington Gardens! Excessively mediocre as is their playing (so feeble and thin, from want of requisite numbers), this same genteel, not fashionable, public of "*nobodies*" are often disappointed, even at the maximum of two fixed days each week;—this too, by regiments which cost us, in officers and men, about ten times as much as Continental ones; whose officers besides are all men of fortune (or should be, as they affect to be), independent of their pay. It is useless guessing at where the fault lies in particular; government should set all such things to rights. Few among us know or care any thing about the matter. To be sure every thing is comparative as to good, bad, and indifferent, in this artificial world of ours, and ignorance is indeed bliss. The French, though respectable in their bands, are far inferior to the German ones in numbers and in taste, if not in science.

One can never forget the rich harmony of a German regimental band of ninety or one hundred strong—those glorious swells! the crescendo, and the diminuendo.

The weather is very cold, and they say it has rained a great deal; and yet these two great rivers are unusually low. I walked through the Museum, round the cloisters of its extensive court, full of well-arranged

Digitized by Google

relics of antiquity, tombs and inscribed marbles of the Romans.

On the first floor a rich collection of coins and medals, vases in terra cotta, women's ornaments, bracelets, rings, in gold, statuettes in bronze, &c. This department on the Rhone has been found rich in Roman remains. On the second floor a very fair gallery of paintings by artists of the town; many of them might well put to shame some of our R. A.s. on our National Gallery walls, who in thirty or forty years seem to do nothing but repeat themselves, so that what merit they once had becomes tiresome, even a defect.

But whether in painting or in statuary, in enlightened taste of any sort, who would suspect that our Fine Arts Commission, and those who lead, direct, and patronise such things, were really wide awake? that they had ever been on the Continent — had ever seen what is left us of the Greeks and Romans and Egyptians, or even the middle ages! Look at the frescoes and sculpture (after all) of the chosen few in our new Houses of Parliament! fit comment and corollary to the two small boxes all our M.P.s cannot be crammed into, and our Peers can be just found a scanty room for, and where they have much ado to hear or see each other. To say nothing of the vast sums thrown away to enable a quack in physics to be a nuisance to both houses, by his blowings of hot and cold, as if the architect had not sins enough of his

Digitized by Google

own (on the whole) without this odious addition to contend with; to delay, and to swell the hundreds of thousands to the country - only weakening and deforming. But, setting aside the interior, no man with the least eye to architectural effect can cross Westminster Bridge, and not at once perceive that the whole building is too low — platform, terrace, and all.

Its little elaborate frittering, particularly of the roof, harmonises with nothing near it. It is pretty; but we should have had something grand — noble. Immense high towers will, I fear, only bring out its defects all the more conspicuous.

But I am at Lyons. I went to the theatre, which is large and handsome, with a band of at least sixty. I am not orthodox in liking Robert le Diable much better than the less melodious and sadder Huguenots, the music of which is even more difficult. I thought it very well performed; but the French are inexorable critics. They would only applaud the *prima donna,* Madame Barbot. This is the grand theatre; there is a second, the "Celestins" — constantly filled; as are various concert-rooms, professional and amateur.

Walking about a good deal, I see nothing of a squalid, lean manufacturing population, as I rather expected; on the contrary, the crowd every where clean and comfortably clothed, and not a beggar! Begging is very properly *strictly* forbidden in all French cities; not as with us —

Digitized by Google

forbidden, and allowed to go on under the noses of our latitudinarian police; no doubt partly from the contradictory orders they receive, at least the want of precision in them, partaking of that comfortable harum-scarum which guides all our public affairs.

I am, as I write on, conscious of what is likely to be remarked by my readers, where my comparisons, which in truth I cannot help making, are so often against ourselves: but, much as I love my country, much as I enjoy many things still left in common among us, still given us as blessings from heaven,—yet would I rather sin in underrating what may be a matter of taste or a doubtful good, than run into that sort of insipid praise of every thing left behind me, and contempt of all foreign excellence, which too often marks the track of us travelling English.

I can only glance comparatively at our brutalities, our ignorances, our anomalies, corruptions, nuisances, and absurdities, which any one among us reads of more at large set forth in our morning papers with a minuteness, a truth, and fidelity which one would think could allow of no difference of opinion—so monstrous, so mischievous, that one wonders any government, even the most imbecile, corrupt, or barbarous, could allow them to exist a single day. We are in the habit of setting off our personal freedom, and "glorious constitution," under which no man has any choice whatever, more than

Digitized by Google

on the Continent, where despotism, after all, only falls now and then heavily on a very few of the upper class, and is, at least, as years roll on, wisely and rapidly extending, as in France, amelioration to the million, unobstructed by the interested efforts and clamour, of certain classes — as with us — making reform of any sort, or good to the whole, so difficult — so impossible! These miseries are not imaginary. They beset us in our streets — at our doors; they impoverish, poison, and degrade London, and more or less all our cities, our country towns, every village, every man!

In this enlightened age, we should naturally look to the House of Commons and House of Peers for an instant remedy for such crying evils. It lies with them as positively as with the most powerful autocrat — and they do nothing — nothing most essential. One prime minister succeeds another, the mere automaton of the day. He talks, indeed, — is tired to death talking, — but session after session does nothing. Even the attempt at any good is frittered away by opposition, and the most eagerly desired blessings prayed for by the multitude, are shelved.

And so we rub on, eat and drink (as we can), from year to year, with full liberty to publish, and read, and *feel* all our defects. But not to redress them! there lies the eternal ministerial *difficulty*.

Digitized by Google

We are now talking of a further reform, which, as I write, is cunningly shelved.

Will any kind stickler for the powers, the mind, and the things that be, tell me that these are mere specks in the sun? that the whole civilised world is full of nuisances? that nobody and nothing is perfect?— Sir, I am your most humble servant: who shall gravely answer that?

Nay, am I not travelling amidst lots of miseries and nuisances—all equally wanting putting to rights? Yes, yes; it is a great consolation and an excellent apology for ourselves—'tis enough.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. II.

THE RHONE. — AVIGNON. — INLAND SEA OF THE BERRE. — MARSEILLES — ITS BASTIDES AND CABANONS. — COMMERCE. — POLICE COURTS. — THE PEOPLE. — THE COUNTRY. — TOULON. — THE DOCKYARD AND PORT.

Last days of November. — Very cold, but sunshiny. The Rhone is so low that several sandbanks are dry opposite the town, and the steamer is obliged this morning to remain below the town on the *Saone* side, instead of its usual place on the Rhone quays.

As usual, we are all packed in omnibuses, and put down in the mud at the river side before daylight, always an hour before starting. The boat of the same description as those above from Chalons, and all the best places carefully taken possession of by the French; we were a good many of us English. The whole very crowded and disagreeable from want of room; as to any attention or civility such as one finds in our worst-regulated steamers, that was quite out of the question. This Rhone Steam Company seem to give no orders to their servants of that kind.

The hills on the right bank of the Saone still accompany us down the Rhone, below the junction of the two rivers, where we shoot under the viaduct, across the

Digitized by Google

Saone, of the railway to St. Etienne, a town below, famous for its ribbon factories. For some miles this railway follows the river side. St. Etienne has grown into great importance of late years; its population now exceeds 100,000. The trade between its manufactories and those of Lyons very great, and the trains on its rail-road, of fifteen leagues, very frequent, particularly in goods. The railway follows the right bank of the Rhone some distance down the river.

As we proceed downwards, the hills on the right hand are responded to by others on the left, all with more or less picturesque beauty and effect,—most where their rugged summits are bare rock; but they seem every where cultivated in vines, maize, or grain of some sort, wherever possible. As we proceed, particularly after the ancient city of Vienne, these hills swell to mountains, with their frequent towns, villages, and castles on both banks, which I thought often as beautiful as the Rhine. We very frequently pass under suspension bridges, even at the smaller towns; thrown across of late years. The body of water and breadth of the Rhone on the whole rather disappointed me,—to be sure it is said to be unusually low,— we dragged over the gravel more than once; and at the *mauvais pas* of the *Pont de St. Esprit;* the general breadth of the river, I should say, was about five hundred yards, not more than the Saone, or itself above their junction. A strong

Digitized by Google

cold wind from the north has been following us all day, increasing as we descend, and so sharp that few of us can manage to keep on deck long at a time. By the time we got down to Avignon it was almost a storm; this is the "*mistral*" which, sweeping down the valley of the Rhone, is so much dreaded on the plains below, about Marseilles, and all across to Montpellier westward, as well as the country to the coast towards the Alps.

In travelling, one should shake off all ideas of ordinary comforts, they are out of the question; but it is provoking enough when one's discomforts are increased, as in these boats, so stupidly and unnecessarily — to say nothing of their own peculiar unfitness for floating at all. There is a large island which divides the river into two branches opposite Avignon; its left branch washes the walls of the town, but, owing to the lowness of the water just now, they are obliged to land the steam-boat passengers three miles off on the branch the furthest side of the island, in a spot as wild as Australia. Being dark by this time (past five), and bitter cold, the prospect of what next, as nothing was explained, was any thing but agreeable. On making fast to a temporary plank jetty, a parcel of rough porters rush on board, and, as at Lyons, make confusion worse confounded. We had heard of these fellows demanding all sorts of unconscionable sums for carrying a trunk a few yards in this

Digitized by Google

wilderness, that is, to where all the string of omnibuses are drawn up in a meadow near this temporary landing. However, it turned out better than we expected so far, and patience perforce gets through a good deal. My fellow was content with a franc for carrying my trunk to the 'bus, where there was an immense confusion and gabbling of unknown tongues. When at length seated, I found it impossible not to laugh at some of the unhappy ones, whose baggage was carried to the wrong 'buses, or they themselves thrust into the wrong one. A woe-begone American youth in a knowing wide-awake, a transatlantic Verdant Green, could not find his luggage, being innocent of any French; all his talk in good Bostonian English, and explanations of kind fellow travellers in bad French, only made matters more hopeless. Next day, it turned out that he at last walked the whole way across the island with one of his boxes, paying a guide, who, in a dismal spot, he had strong apprehensions, he said, would turn out what he looked excessively like — a real footpad! All this, and fifty mishaps of others, was duly related next morning at the Hôtel de l'Europe, at breakfast; however, being safe and sound, our cousin found after all that he had lost nothing beyond five francs, paid for hunting up his missing baggage.

The whole country, as we descend towards the Bouches du Rhone, is one immense flat, with the spurs

Digitized by Google

of rocky mountains framing the picture. Avignon on the river is sometimes flooded in the lower parts of the town; three years ago, the *salles-à-manger* in this hotel were flooded half way up to the ceiling.

The old palace on the terrace, so long the Papal residence, is the most remarkable thing here; it is now used as a gaol, a barrack, and a church. I ran up to this terrace; the morning a bright sunshine, though bitter cold—set off the fine surrounding view to great advantage,—one sees an immense distance on all sides. The country rich in villages, country seats, and careful cultivation; besides the interest naturally attached to the first look at any new spot, extended here by the immense sweep over the plains west, to the borders of the Durance, south, including the celebrated Vaucluse to the north.

How different things turn out from all one's preconceived notions of cities or countries! how useless all descriptions! Truth itself is not always truth, every thing depending on circumstances of infinite shades. Thus, far from wishing to linger on the Rhone, I was too happy to get into a first class carriage next morning (full of English,—indeed all along we have formed more than half the first class travellers), on the railway to Marseilles, by Terrascon and Arles; of which towns we have only a flying view, and now and then glimpses of the river.

Digitized by Google

Flocks of sheep are fed on these plains, where nothing but a stunted grass will grow; this is the much esteemed *près salé* mutton. We now begin to see the mulberry tree,—still in leaf, and looking very like our apple trees, in the distance; olive trees now thicken in the landscape too. These, with the vine and a few firs on the rocky hills, form the only shade of this whole country. I forget the fig, but just now its bare crooked branches scarcely catch the eye.

The exceedingly even surface and perfect level of this vast plain, which divides the mouths of the Rhone, far as the eye can reach to the distant blue mountains east and west, is very remarkable; in some spots it is covered by pebbles, once rounded by the ocean's wave.

Nothing can be better than this railway; the time kept to a minute, and this easy flight, stopping at Terrascon and Arles but a few minutes, extremely agreeable. At the former town one sees King René's château —very handsome it is: both these towns date from the middle ages, and are remarkable for quaint, picturesque old houses, towers, monasteries, and churches. This, however, applies to the whole country; every town and village, if not rich in some Roman gateway, or viaduct, aqueduct, or bridge, is still curious in its mediæval walls and ruins, with its story attached. The railway crosses the Durance, and follows the line of the Rhone to *Arles*, then across the plain to the rocky hills which encircle

Digitized by Google

the inland sea, or *Étang de Berre*, a vast estuary or lake.

Approaching Marseilles, the views on all sides, as we get among the hills, grow more strikingly beautiful. These hills increase in size, and their summits, limestone rocks, crown the heights of rich valleys, particularly at St. Hamas, near the lake, where there is a Roman gateway, or arch, and bridge still entire; and below this (the village on the hill side very pretty) extends the immense estuary or salt lake—an inlet of the Mediterranean, closed, however, externally, but having all the appearance, at first sight, of the sea itself.

In a few minutes more, as we fly along, we run under the northern rocky hills which circle round Marseilles,—I think the longest tunnel in the world—longer a good deal than our Box tunnel. We now come in really on the Mediterranean, the Bay of Marseilles, and, with a gentle sweep of three or four miles among country houses and gardens, reach the station, in an elevated position of the city, above the Cour d'Aix, and triumphal arch, and near a large cemetery (made in 1836).

The day beautifully bright and pleasant; the varied views of the sea, the rocks, the thousands of small villas and country houses, here called *bastides*, with their walled gardens, showing us an inexhaustible richness on all sides, strike like magic on leaving the gloom of the tunnel; and only ending very *à propos* where we had

Digitized by Google

something else to think of,—trunks and tickets, omnibuses and hotels.

Continental views away from the sea-side never stand taking in detail—cannot bear inspection; the illusion is destroyed as you approach. A barn of a place, and withered long grass, and high stone walls look all very well in the far distance; but soon one longs for our own home, meadows, and lawns, our neatness, comforts, luxuries: here, to be sure, we have grandeur—one cannot well fancy any thing finer than the site of Marseilles; an inner and outer port, the bay sheltered by two islands outside, the Ratonneau and Château d'Iff, with a semicircle of rocky hills swelling to mountains framing in the extensive suburbs and city. To see this grand whole at a glance,—sea, city, and country round,—the shortest and most pleasant way is to walk up the "Cour" to the "Mount Buonaparte;" to the left, over the harbour's mouth and the Citadel St. Nicholas; it is indeed a glorious panorama. The inner harbour which runs a mile into the heart of the city, as full as it can cram of ships, the rocky circling coast to the north-west, the countless garden houses rising from the suburbs and extending on their hills on all sides for miles to the picturesque rocky frame all round, steamers and sailing vessels coming in and out, complete this most magnificent scene.

This "Cour" or Boulevard Buonaparte is the nearest

Digitized by Google

comeatable walk out of the upper end of the fashionable street St. Feriol. The ascent is gentle at first, but pretty steep when within the kind of garden, up which the walks zig-zag to the column Buonaparte, now a broken neglected pedestal. I came every day to enjoy this beautiful view, which fine weather and flying clouds set off to the greatest advantage; besides, one gets clear of the dirt, the smoke, and the most disagreeable smells of the streets and harbour, which, having no current through it, is made even a greater abomination than our own poor dear Thames, in spite of good stringent regulations.

Marseilles is full of fine houses, giving one, indeed, a good idea of the riches of her merchants; but the streets are very irregular, narrow, and dirty; the foot pavements neglected, hardly known of old, are still very badly attended to, and whatever the sanitary regulations may be, filth of all sorts meets you at every step. At this season, the first week in December, there is indeed more sheer mud and less of those dreadful smells than in the warmer weather; but they are bad even now I find occasionally. To add to all this, night carts (there are no sewers, — a grand one to encircle the harbour is in contemplation) go about during the day collecting from door to door: on them is painted "*salubrité publique.*"

The heart of the city round the harbour is very

Digitized by Google

densely peopled; blind alleys and back streets, five yards wide, with houses six stories high, intersect each other, keeping out the sun, and keeping in all sorts of noxious vapours. They have gone on increasing in trade and riches even from the beginning of this our present century, in spite of war, revolutions, dreadful epidemics, even plagues; the city itself and suburbs covers three times the ground it did forty years ago, and its inhabitants are doubled at least, so that one would at least expect something better for the "*salubrité publique.*"

All the richer and leading people, however, have their country seats close by on the terraced hills all round, quite clear of these disagreeables: during the summer they are only in town during business hours, the women and children at their "Bastides," as their country boxes are called. Omnibuses run up and down these hills in all directions to a distance of three and four miles, so that even the moderately well off easily get in and out: some of these Bastides are very small, with but three or four tiny rooms. A smaller set still, perched on their walled terraces or bare rocks, with a fig, and vine, or an olive are called *Cabanons.* Both the Bastides and Cabanons are very generally shut up during the winter season, when the families remove into town, for even the rich practice a very exact economy; one sees very few private carriages in the streets, those above omnibuses

Digitized by Google

taking cabs (mostly handsome broughams), and at the same rate as the Paris ones. I find them behindhand with their shops, except a few in the Rues St. Feriol and Paradis, in furniture, silk mercers, ornamental porcelain, and gilt bronze; their grocers' are miserable dens, —tea is bought at their druggists': — much as it was an age ago.

The harbour's face on the north side is filled by slop sellers, and grog shops as a matter of course, counting and warehouses; the quays, always a very active, busy scene, crowded with curious groups of Greeks, Turks, Arabs, and specimens of all the Mediterranean shores.

The commercial activity is very great, loading and unloading, the shipping lying in tiers close packed, their bows and sterns touching the wharves. On fine days large spaces are occupied by men winnowing, measuring, and sacking great piles of wheat with sieves hung from a triangle; all the produce of the East and West is carrying in every possible way to and from the ships and warehouses; dried fruits, cotton, liquors, wines, hardware, china, and all the vast aggregate called dry goods.

The chief trade lies with the Adriatic and Archipelago, Spain and the United States, Algiers and Alexandria, and some little with England; with us, on the contrary, there should be the greatest, to our mutual benefit. It is a curious thing to find, so far on in the

Digitized by Google

century, leading statesmen on both sides checking, indeed hindering, that beneficent intercourse which should reciprocally flow in; but so it is. With us every good move meets difficulties from bad laws and the tender immunities of monopolies; ministers can do nothing without first sweeping off, by acts of Parliament, these barbarous hindrances which beset our ports and damp the spirit of our sailors and merchants, hurt our shipping, and raise the price of all good things to us, while it blocks the outlet of our own manufactures and natural products. Our free trade enactments are yet far from free: the first step to a really free trade would be sweeping off all custom-houses and that army of drones, custom-house officers,—*vide* that pleasant lawsuit of last summer, the tyranny of our custom-house triumphing, after all, over our long vexed and impeded merchants.

The French of late, with an absolute government, still keep up their old absurd and hurtful system of enormous duties and prohibitions; any thing but friendly, though our fleets are acting in concert, and it is the fashion happily, at this moment, to pay each other compliments,— rather hollow, however. We persist in not taking their wine and brandy, and they will not have our iron, coal, and cotton; and thus one sees very little of our flag in their harbours: the Americans have almost entirely superseded us.

However, as far as passengers go, we have a pretty

Digitized by Google

brisk intercourse here, and a few of our merchantmen are seen in the port occasionally. Indeed there is a constant current of travellers across France to and from the steam-boats here to all parts of the Mediterranean. The French steamers start regularly for Algiers, Alexandria, the Adriatic, and Constantinople. There are Spanish steamers too to the neighbouring Spanish ports all round to Cadiz, a regular line of French steamers to Italy, and another line of Italian steamers running to Naples and Sicily; of late we have a line of steamers here too, rather larger than the French, every two weeks making the passage round the Italian coast, stopping at Genoa, Leghorn, Civita Vecchia, Naples, and Malta.

Our own countrymen and women may, I think, stand for a good third of their passengers, in all these various boats, except perhaps to Algiers, to which shore we are not particularly tempted as yet. I am told the English boats are the best — the Vectis and Valetta — they certainly are the most liberal, as the passage is the same (6*l.* to Naples) in both; the English boats including meals, the French charging them additional. They make the regulations too, on embarking, very expensive and vexatious, by compelling passengers to take their clumsy, but safe, roomy boats, and harbour watermen, who ply at the stairs at the lower end of the Canebière Street (the head of the harbour), when one might so much easier

Digitized by Google

walk on board! besides the usual passport, and "*permit*" nuisance, which our consuls are so improperly allowed to countenance, by deriving an additional fee from the imposition; in short, they (our consuls and the police) play into each other's hands, to add, wantonly, one would think, to the inevitable disgust of travelling on the continent.

December 8th. — The weather for this last week has been constant sunshine, and just cool enough to make walking pleasant. The body of the town is soon known, and the few squares and streets most frequented, all near the port itself.

The one great street and thoroughfare most crowded, and, as a starting point, where all the great hotels and cafés are, is the *Canebière*, a short, wide street, opening on the inner harbour. Of late years they have constructed an outer harbour (hardly yet completed), of great capacity, for their increased trade, called the (*De la*) *Goliette*, close to the north of the northern fort of St. John, at the inner harbour's mouth. This outer grand harbour is very extensive, stretching to the foot of the rocky cliff of the old quarantine fort or lazaretto, removed lately to the larger Island Ratonneau, outside the *Chateau d'Iff*. The Place Royale, the Rue Paradis, and the Rue St. Ferriol, open out on the Canebière, which, running in an easterly direction upwards, crosses the *Cour St. Louis* (a sort of boulevard, stretching to the

Digitized by Google

triumphal arch, north), cutting the city in two, up the narrow Rue de Noailles, and upwards along the Allée Meilhan, into the new streets of the eastern suburb,—every where rather up hill all round, no matter what street you may fancy to explore.

The bright sun gilds and makes every thing beautiful. I have already talked of the great beauty of the environs of Marseilles; that is, when from any eminence you take in the whole scene, far and near, framed by the picturesque rocky hills and mountains, four and six miles off. But when you get out of the dirty streets (as is every where the case on the continent), you find yourself in a muddy or dusty narrow road, shut in between two high stone walls; in vain you walk a mile or two out any one suburb, you can see nothing. However, by perseverance, and by taking various omnibuses (fares 9 sous) running out of town, (their stands are chiefly in the Cour St. Louis, and near the Canebière) to the distant villages,—north to St. Louis, north-east to *La Rose*, south-east to *St. Barnabé* (all saints), and south to St. Margarite and the Prado,—one manages at last to get rid of these eternal stone walls and hanging terraces. Some of the villas (bastides) are pretty enough, in their small walled gardens shaded by firs, vines, figs, and olive trees; but grass plots and trim lawns, as with us, are of course out of the question, all such things are here very much in the rough. The

Digitized by Google

most wealthy seem to keep no gardener; and at this season most of their country houses are shut up entirely, and left to take care of themselves. I see a good many to let and sell, and lots of inviting "*lots*" for sale, freehold, to build on.

To be sure this is an extraordinary cold winter, but in this hot climate, where every thing during summer and autumn is burnt up, where the roads are an inch or two thick in dust, and the white rocks every where, together with stone walls, are reflecting back the sun's rays — that one great blessing of life, water, is very ably and abundantly supplied; fountains are every where spouting in the streets, and the gutters rushing beside you. The great aqueduct coming from the north (beyond the range of rocky hills in sight, supplied by the Durance), crossing at one spot "Roc *Favoure*," on stupendous arches 240 feet high, much exceeding the grandeur of the "*Pont du Garde*;" it is led along a canal on the summit of the northern hills of the "Aguelades," and is brought into reservoirs commanding the highest parts of the city, in a never-failing abundance, paid for when laid on, but prodigally supplied to every body in the streets: they have recently made a vast covered filtering tank on the high platform near the Colonne Bonaparte.

But such are the ample dimensions of this body of water, that it supplies the villas in its passage, to all

Digitized by Google

who will be at the expense of pipes, and under certain regulations. I saw it in great profusion in the gardens of M. de Castelane, at Les Aguelades, and several of his neighbours, and at the "*Châlet*" tavern and garden near the village, where it is the fashion to go in parties of pleasure.

This is one of the spots, a mile and half north of St. Louis, cited for its fine coup d'œil. M. de Castelane (there is an omnibus up to his gate, which I missed, and went a steeple chase across under the rail-road) is quoted as one of the millionaires of the city; he is brother to the marshal. He comes out of town every evening to his shades and cascades here; but we should call his grounds miserably kept; the walks, the parterres, the cascades, the flowers,—a sort of negligent, weedy wildness,—not quite disagreeable, by way of change, to an Englishman. They were, though so very late in the year, making hay—a precious thing in this country—in his meadow below his garden; through which, by the way, he very liberally allows every body to pass to and from the village beyond him. I could only get snatches of the view here, so I continued on up through the steep, dirty street of the place, to the rocks and firs half a mile beyond, to a stone bridge over the canal, whose waters, clear, deep and swift, were hurrying on to the city, well able to afford all sorts of garden fountains in its course along these hills; here,

Digitized by Google

indeed, the view is delightful, but so it is wherever one can reach any unobstructed, rising ground. It is a bright sunny Sunday, people dressed, and many shops shut,—a custom gaining ground since the renewed empire.

I take a fresh ramble every day. I have just been musing, melancholy enough, about the cemetery, near the railway station, in the upper part of the town, beyond the arch (Porte d'Aix).

They were bringing in some poor creature's remains, followed by a group of humble friends; a priest and cross headed the procession till it turned aside to the "fosse commune," where, an outward shell taken off, a plain deal board coffin was quietly slid down into the trench (filling by degrees, as is usual in the larger towns).

Here we all bent our heads uncovered, while an old man, apparently the nearest relative, said a short prayer,—and so an end. The priest's part of the ceremony had previously ceased, I conclude, at some church, for he had left. The railway sweeps round this eminence to the north, going under the hills near the defile of "Les Egalades,"—under these hills runs the long tunnel I have mentioned.

The front face of Marseilles is nearly north and south to the sea, every where a steep rocky shore; a kind of indurated clay in some spots (though generally

Digitized by Google

all these hills are limestone), mixed with ocean pebbles, a conglomerate. Near the sea baths, about a mile out of town, at the circle of the *Octroi*, guarded at every quarter or half mile by a custom-house officer, I came out on the rocks by the beach, where a fine stream joins the sea. Here I observed several parties, ladies and gentlemen, eating a curious kind of shell-fish called "*oursons*" (*bear's cubs*), very much resembling a chesnut bur in its outward black husk, for it is not a shell, but a tough, black, prickly integument, which the fisherman cuts open, and comes at the fish, a kind of reddish lobes, like fish-row or blubber, or whatever it is; it clings to the rocks, and people eat it, they *say*, to give an appetite! Oysters here are scarce and dear, which may account for this sort of queer substitute. I found it eaten all round the coast of Italy to Naples, and every port badly supplied with fish; one hardly ever sees a lobster, prawn, or crab, or turbot, brill, cod, or salmon, — a sort of coarse trout and whiting, and a few soles only. Besides this stream to the north of the city, there is another small river, the Garret, which, running round the eastern suburbs, joins a third, the Haonne, and falls into the sea on the south shore at the *Prado*, which is the fashionable drive and promenade of the town; omnibuses go to it every half-hour, out the Rue St. Ferriol: in this southern suburb, and on to the village of St. Margarite, to the left, are said to be the most

Digitized by Google

favoured "bastides" of the merchants. It is, indeed, less hilly near the town, though leading to the highest mountain, the Penne, and gives them more space for larger gardens; but those very bare, abrupt hills, and bald, rocky precipices overhanging the sea, to the south of the harbour, and under the high mount of "Nôtre Dame de la Garde" (a thousand yards up the rocks, above the garden and Colonne Buonaparte), it is, which to me constitute the great charm of the spot.

Perhaps it is that I am tired of the fat, earthy, clayey, dead level of London, and our market gardens, with our smoke and damp. Thence, for a time at least, these rugged, bare, health-breathing, lofty contrasts delight. I ignorantly wonder at the bad taste of their owners, shutting up their villas, and even their "cabanons" of perhaps two rooms, to go and begrime themselves in the dirty narrow streets below in the city. Nor are they without smoke; of late coal is much burned, and factory chimneys send forth their black poisons in all directions, so that more than once, when it has been rather calm, I found a tolerably thick curtain of smoke hiding half the body of the town. It was so at Lyons, and Paris itself is beginning to have its clear skies tinged.

Few are interested about statistics,—besides I have no data to go by, and know not a soul to ask a question of. I find this city now is said to contain 200,000

Digitized by Google

souls; and, as to its commerce, one may guess it is thriving, from the outward signs of its two harbours full of shipping, and the constant coming and going of merchantmen, and by the crowds daily collected at the exchange on the Place Royale, even to overflowing, up the Rue Paradis; other signs of opulence may be seen at the two theatres, filled nightly. The grand theatre has an opera every other night. I went to see "Moïse" (Rossini's) excellently done in every way. The singing, the dresses, the ballet, and the orchestra of eighty to ninety musicians! equal to our own Queen's theatre; the band more numerous! This is a very large, handsome house, and well filled by a well-dressed audience. I looked round the première circle and private boxes in search of an English face; I think there must have been a few, though our young men abroad, by letting their beards grow, &c., make themselves doubtful at a distance; yet I could detect here and there one of ourselves, by a certain affected carriage, a want of *repose!* and a too marked use of the opera glass. Don't let us fancy our manners are not observed, and severely criticised by the Continent; we are certainly not conspicuous for ease or grace; our constant affectation of some sort at home contrasts very lamely abroad in loquacious bad French or Italian; an incessant puerile bustle and curiosity, and a straining after originality, much better let alone,—as an "original"

Digitized by Google

is always said in contempt of any one in France. The sooner we learn to be very quiet, and say very little, the better.

A professor here remarked, that the "*institute*" were indeed very good-natured to sit so long patiently under the boring of a certain law lord's bad French, and most uninteresting matter; but this is of a very great *original*, who wanted to be a lord and a French citizen at the same time!

Another sign of prosperity here is the total absence of beggars,—begging is indeed forbidden,—but I do not see such rags, such utter reckless destitution, in any of the narrow meaner streets, or the more lonely suburbs, as among ourselves; indeed I have not seen a single being in rags, or unmistakeably a beggar. This sets me to thinking on that line of Pope's about governments:—

"Whate'er is best administered, is best."

Here is an active, unmistakeable comment on the scribbling of the age among ourselves, of ten thousand brilliant, but very worthless speeches in "*both houses.*" In spite of various wars, civil wars, changes of dynasties, in spite of much ignorance, much hot-headedness, much religious superstition, and even, worst of all, much scarcity this winter, both in bread and wine, here is a land, whose government we affect to despise or pity, that

Digitized by Google

has infinitely more reason to despise or pity us! They retain at least the solid good to the poorest creature; they have enough to eat, and are decently clothed; their police courts drag to light nothing approaching the dire distress, nor the excessive, heartless brutality of our lowest classes. What signifies diversity of ignorant or prejudiced opinions! It is indeed high time for us to be awake to facts, our opinions would be too ridiculous were they not too melancholy,—but we love our opinions, we live on and enjoy them: very well—meantime "*clothes, food, and fire*" for the multitude becomes every day a more and more serious question, only helped a little of late by the tide of emigration. Crime is multiplied even by the very laws made to redress it. Beggars swarm in our streets, beset our doors; the children of our back slums and blind alleys, left to run wild, pour out and commit all sorts of petty mischief, besides their noise, quite unchecked by the police, who stalk about holding familiar conversations with pot-boys, maid servants, or with the knots of idlers hanging about our taverns and gin palaces, where there can be no doubt they are too often treated by the most good for nothing characters, and *made safe!*

It is now the middle of December, and though warm in the sun occasionally, yet it is oftener very cold and wet. To-day I attended a lecture, very thoroughly and well given—or rather a good honest lesson by the professor of

Digitized by Google

Arabic here, M. de Salles. There were however only five in his class, the government rather discouraging it,—though, indeed, if ever useful, it must be now the empire includes Algiers, besides so much of the trade with the East and the African shores. It lasted an hour and a half. (There is no university, but professors give lectures in philosophy, chemistry, astronomy, appointed and paid by government.) From thence to the police court, where, up behind the *town hall* (hôtel de ville), and close to the cathedral, is one of the courts of the "Palais Impérial de Justice." This office corresponds essentially with our London police offices, and as it is nearly the same all over France, I will briefly describe it. At the farther end of a large pannelled room, on a raised platform, the president and two assistant judges, with their black caps and gowns (entering from a door at their end), took their seats behind their desks; on their right on one side sat the clerk and assistant, on their left the deputy attorney-general, or *avocat* for the crown, who generally explained, and allowed nothing essential in law to be overlooked, for or *against* the prisoners. In front of the judges, below them on the floor, was a sort of counter—the front of it a seat for the accused, after their interrogation or plea—standing. Behind this counter stood an *avocat* for the defence, in answer, where retained, to whatever the attorney for the crown insisted on.

Digitized by Google

Several *avocats*, in their caps and gowns, came in and out, and several *gensdarmes*. Benches with backs occupied nearly half the room behind, and a further good space was densely crowded by the standing audience. The poorer classes were equally admitted to the benches, where, on the left hand, the various prisoners sat among their friends and others concerned, the witnesses and principals being often mixed with the mere spectators.

Where the crown did not prosecute, the plaintiff was first called by the clerk, repeated by an active personage in a black gown, the *Huissier;* but an officer in more authority, and of more consequence than our beadles. He kept "silence," put people in their seats, and others, when too full, out of the court, &c., handed in papers, explained to the women, &c. At two o'clock the judges were announced, and took their seats. The plaintiff as well as defendant is addressed by the president,— asked their names, their profession, their age, their residence, and the prisoner or defendant if ever he has been "condemned." He is then told to relate the facts, which done, he is told to resume his seat. I forget that, previous to the complaint or defence, both parties, as they stand alternately in front of the judge, are reminded that they are there to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, to which they are told to raise their hands and swear! They answer, "*oui, je le*

Digitized by Google

jure," extending their uplifted right hand. After the accusation, and the plaintiff has retired to his seat, the accused is called, and in the same way told to tell his story. To both parties the president, and even the attorney, occasionally make remarks as they proceed — if too prolix, or if contradictory or absurd — clearing the case of obscurity, &c. The accused is then told to sit down (in front, on the prisoners' seat),—a pause takes place, the judges consult for a moment, or the president asks a question of the attorney, if anything obscure or contradictory to the written evidence, or he asks either party for a further explanation, for or against them, referring to the *Code Napoleon* (that blessing to the nation!); he pronounces sentence in the form, "*attendu que.*" &c. If a simple case of theft or ill conduct, resisting the police, drunkenness and threats, &c., they were condemned to a week's or a month's prison; boys under 16 to the house of correction for five years! two cases for stealing five francs from a little girl (who gave her evidence wonderfully clear and well, at the, to her, awful tribunal, as she stood in front of the president, and all eyes on her); in another case for stealing rabbits from a woman,— so that these lads will be corrected, and made honest men of, instead of being sent to prison, as ours are, just long enough to harden and make them ten times worse.

Most of the cases were quickly despatched — two,

Digitized by Google

however, were of more consequence: a gentleman was complained of as threatening the harbour master, to provoke him to a duel; in this case, after the accused was heard, the attorney pleaded warmly for the crown against him, while his barrister replied in mitigation much more at length. The whole thing seemed trivial enough;—a slight push had been given by the lieutenant of the navy; his opponent (on the stairs at his office-door) had called him a "*lache*," our "coward," and dared him to follow him to the street. There was a longer consultation between the judges,—the president hesitated; at length the defendant was told to stand up, and the judge, addressing him, began with the constant formula, "attendu que vous avez," &c. "la cour vous condamne" to a month's imprisonment. This seemed to me severe. In one case, where a young man had no passport, and could not give a clear account of himself, though he had done nothing wrong, and was working about whenever he could get a job, he was condemned to a week's prison, and told meantime to write to his village or to somebody who might *know something about him*. Two young men were condemned as idle vagabonds, hanging on their poor relations, to a week's prison, with a strict injunction to take to better ways. They had taken some trifle from a cart,—not exactly a theft. Their mothers came in front in tears,—as did indeed the mothers of the boys,—and they

Digitized by Google

were listened to patiently, and answered mildly. In one case, where a working man had behaved rudely to a Commissaire de Police, who had detained his passport for some reason, he was condemned to a month's prison, —the prison, by the way, is in the same building as the court house, the temporary one at least.

In all this there is nothing but what one sees at home in our own police courts, except the mixture of pleading, the robes, and the greater ceremony.

French justice is condemned among us for sifting the truth too closely; on the other hand, what can be so absurd, so utterly silly, as warning accused parties *not to* implicate themselves!—as if on purpose to thwart the ends of justice, and puzzle the clearest evidence. Thence the monstrous verdicts so often given with us against the clearest facts—or rather the original clear evidence be muddled, twisted, and obscured—till at last the jury can make neither head nor tail of it, and the greatest villains are acquitted, and let loose afresh on the town. In London this imbecile system gets more mischievous and more dreadful every day; hardly a day passes that our daily papers have not to comment on these imbecile and "most lame conclusions." Sometimes the judge, sometimes the jury,—indeed our juries get so bad, that the "TIMES," which never wants for that strong male sense which seizes on the most probable or true side of any mixed question, has more than once

Digitized by Google

lamented the power of our ignorant or prejudiced juries returning verdicts against the plainest evidence, against facts, against probability; in the same way as some of our judges have directed and given as extraordinary sentences. However, such is the inextricable confusion and self-contradiction of our laws, that both parties find an excuse in their endless obscure labyrinths.

Considering that this is supposed to be the most turbulent city in France, next to Lyons, there was another feature in this police court, filled by the poorer classes, worth noting. They were all decently dressed, prisoners and all; all behaved with the utmost decorum, all spoke clearly, and to the purpose; and, as in the case of the gentleman who had threatened the harbour master, whatever we may think of the severity of some of the sentences, not a word was uttered by the suffering party. One equal law (good or bad) was dealt, in form and in substance, to high and low. After all, the consequences might have been very serious, had the lieutenant waived his right of appeal to the laws, and followed his man to the street or the field; with us no gentleman would have been even fined, much less imprisoned; but have simply given security not to repeat the hostile threat for six months or a year.

In French towns all the regulations, all acts and general public decisions, are in the name of the mayor; the

Digitized by Google

prefect, though a superior authority, is only politically so, connected with the Home Secretary. I see an order issued to the bakers (on an understood arrangement) to have ready, 10,000 kilogrammes (20,000 lb.) of bread, to be distributed to the poor, Christmas or New Year's Day, instead of the usual *cakes* or presents to customers, called *pompes*, which, it is presumed, their wealthier patrons will be too happy to give up, for once, this severe and scarce winter.

We are in some sort familiar with France and Italy, with their towns, their manners, their customs; but not only every ten and twenty years things materially change, but in fact we really know very little about the matter. Any man might usefully write a volume of Marseilles *as it is*, so little do we know about it. I am asked if I have been to this church, seen this or that picture:— no; I see none of the very obvious, oft described, cut and dried sights. I ramble about the wharfs, the shores, the nearest hills, watch the water-courses, gather wild thyme on the hill sides.

"I know a bank where the wild thyme grows!" ay, beyond the *Cabot*, a hamlet a mile beyond the village St. Marguerite, where a kind 'bus put me down in the mud, and where, as at all their *cabarets*, "On sert à boire et à manger;" but I did not trouble them. On this road, which here winds through these beauteous mountains to the town of La Cassis, I followed a charm-

Digitized by Google

ing watercourse newly made, to supply more rising bastides in this quarter; and plots of ground inclosing, at the foot of these hills, freehold for sale. To get a good look at the plain and city I left three or four miles behind me I went up a hill to the right, whose summit is crowned by a small chapel (St. Joseph's I think); not that I shall tediously dwell on beautiful views, they are multiplied at every step; the immense network of stone walls and inclosures making the distances mixed with dark clumps of firs, all the richer. I filled my pockets with sprigs of this universal sweet thyme, and fancied, here, in some little nook, I could be content in a tiny cabanon to pass what remains to me of declining life—far, far from the heart burnings, trifling distinctions, contumelies, miseries, and nonsenses of our *West End!* of our modern England; the clack and scandal of our villages, or the second-hand airs of our genteel watering-places; where no man must build or possess anything not under the *ground rent* of lord this or that, or squire this or that; all with us so careful to let go no inch of their many miles of manor.

But the weaknesses, the follies, the clack of these villages, of these kind neighbours, are, mayhap, still the same—done into French! not a doubt of it—softened of some of our extra-sectarian acerbity! but one might here shut them all out by a good high *freehold wall!* and commune only with this sweet thyme and the hum of

Digitized by Google

its summer bees; drink in the smile of this laughing landscape, or dwell on the ripple of the blue waters; which, clear as crystal, wash yon shores;—easily reached by a mile and a half's walk, or round by the walled roads in a little *coupé* and pet nag, which would serve to run in and out of town with, to market, or to an opera or concert now and then, and perhaps, to bring to one some not too mighty friend, who would not eat one's dinner with that supercilious and critical mockery only known amongst us modern English, pleasantly shown off in the pages of Punch, or certain of our weekly and monthly novelists! One would think we English are the most hollow, shallow, interested, selfish, affected, foolish race of people just now in this world. Where are our ten thousand virtues! Oh! we have them all too; the difficulty is got rid of when we confess we are so excessively inconsistent—never a week or a day together the same thing.

Marseilles is called dear; house rent is, and shows a rising wealth. It is not a land of butter and milk, yet both can be had very tolerable and very reasonable, the butter not very good, the milk chiefly supplied by goats one sees in flocks in the streets and environs, tended by their goatherds, even as in the most rural mountains. There is great plenty of fine poultry, delicate lamb and mutton—the smallest legs I ever saw, and vegetables and fruit of all kinds, all at a moderate rate, much less

Digitized by Google

than the same thing in England anywhere, or even in Paris or some of the northern towns. There are several well supplied markets prolonged into the streets, in the French way, on each side under slight sheds or huge umbrellas. Chestnut roasters and boilers abound, and women selling bits of coloured sugar-candy in trays under the trees of the leading avenues or "*cours*," and the *Canebière*, which, together with the northern quays or harbour side, is always crowded.

No French city, even the smallest, is without its gay cafés; but here amongst dozens, are two in the *Canebière*, which would be remarkable even in Paris: the *Café de l'Univers* for its paintings, mirrors, classic figures, and gilding; and the *Café Turc*, which is one mass of mirrors and rich gilding, ceiling and all, reflecting its customers a thousand-fold in every direction.

All the cafés are full of an evening, without the least distinction of rank. Privates can't afford it; but corporals and sergeants of the garrison, carters, people in blouses, country peasants, small shop-keepers and their wives sit mixed with merchants and gentlemen of all kinds of pretensions. One is smothered, indeed, in a cloud of smoke; for every body smokes, in doors and out of doors. It grows quite a madness — you rarely ever see a man without a cigar or a pipe in his mouth. I find I must learn to smoke in my own defence! But here they take snuff too, men and women. I was told

Digitized by Google

that some of the women even *eat* snuff! We hear so very little of Marseilles, that my dwelling on a few superficial things concerning it may be excused; we in England have but a confused idea of its being the very hotbed of sanguinary revolutions, with an unruly, unscrupulous, wretched population! I find it the most decent, orderly city possible; the working classes salute you on the slightest occasion, people universally wish each other good day, and salute each other getting in and out of their omnibuses. In all the mixtures and crowds of the quays and the fair now going on, I have not seen a single instance of quarrelling nor a drunken person, the only exception was yesterday—and, ah me! —an English sailor! Every costume, men and women decently dressed, and the great majority comfortably; no where any token of hunger unsatisfied.

The city I should say, like all French towns, is well and most impartially governed by the prefect and the mayor, who stand out in a position which does not allow of either idle indifference to their duties, or that ignorant selfishness which marks the direction of the most urgent affairs of our municipal system; where nobody is accountable to anybody; where one sees nothing whatever done, except by private individuals for their own exclusive benefit. It certainly with us beautifies and improves in some sort as far as it goes; but there is no wise and general direction for the public good, nor any

Digitized by Google

one man of education, taste, and enlightened views, to direct things. Our noblemen and gentry quite ignore country towns; they drive in and drive out, with no more concern or interest in them, than if they were Timbuctoos, — without the curiosity.

Not that French cities advance rapidly in improvements, as there is the most pinching economy in all the city rates; some of those not wise, the *octroi* for instance; but there is a most *rigid* account kept of all moneys raised, the salaries of all public officers are on the most economical scale, and much is done on very limited means. Here of late, the outer harbour, of immense magnitude and benefit; the shifting of the Lazaretto, many bridges and roads in the environs; and above all, the grand aqueduct, bringing the waters of the Durance through the whole city. The arches of the *Roc Favoure* are stupendous, a work worthy of antiquity; it far surpasses indeed the Pont de Garde. Whatever is done, is done with good taste, perfectly scientific, and of an admirable solidity.

Their grand sewer, now in agitation, round the inner harbour, will no doubt be carried out; in the mean time, there is a very strict regulation in such things. Nothing that can possibly be prevented, is allowed to defile this precious piece of water; one may imagine, literally covered by ships and floating vessels as it is, how much impurity it must suffer; no current or tide helps it, or

Digitized by Google

but in a very trifling degree. There is a canal inside the Fort St. John, at its mouth, leading to La Goliette harbour outside, for the coasters to pass to and fro; but too far from the upper end to make any perceptible cleansing current. Workmen are constantly blasting the rocks away from the harbour side, and sea face, gaining more ground where it is so precious, among the mercantile warehouses and docks on the south side; and this same limestone is a mine of wealth for building purposes. No doubt the leading people here are quite alive to the imperious necessity for the most stringent sanitary regulations; so that however one may be annoyed by the street sides, (according to French custom from time immemorial, and as there are no outlets, so there are no sewers;) at least, the most offensive impurities are carted beyond the suburbs. However, the streets are nowhere kept so clean as they ought to be, in spite of a good regulation for sweeping before their doors the first thing of a morning.

After all, in travelling to the south, whether in France, Spain, or Italy, one catches at a glance all their advantages and disadvantages; of climate, their manner of living and of government; at least as we should feel them, much of it nor this nor that. How is it possible to speak positively as a truth of one or the other, since such things must remain for ever a matter of doubt and dispute! We, at a distance, envy them

Digitized by Google

their sun, their vines, their magnificent remains of antiquity, their beautiful mountain *distances*, their lighter taxes—much of this charm flies on a nearer approach. The summers are to us intolerably hot and oppressive, myriads of insects, flies, and mosquitos, torment one night and day; the whole country, except along their watercourses, is burnt up; there are no parks, few cool shades of nature, no lawns, no gardens; not a thing we consider a luxury or comfort; their roads everywhere smothered with dust, for none are ever watered, not even in the environs of their cities. They dance of a Sunday and at fêtes in a thick layer of fine choking dust! dancing on a *green* is unheard of.

With what longing do we look back on our deserted lawns and flowers! our especial comforts and luxuries in doors and out; no more felt and understood in any part of the Continent, than fifty years ago, or a hundred and fifty.

Of our own government, whether it helps or hinders us is not so much the question as the provoking passport nuisances abroad; as galling as it is futile and absurd. The centralisation and despotism we shudder at otherwise, we find everywhere conducive to the general good, in its vigour and impartiality; their poor are no where so very poor as our own, nor so miserably degraded, while our own individual freedom dwindles to no general good in any one great undertaking or amelioration; all

Digitized by Google

our great wants as a people are, from year to year, left untouched; and the enormous wealth and energy of the empire frittered away on nepotism, jobs, partialities, and monopolies.—If a great pride in, and innate love of one's country did not make one feel indignant at such strange perversities in our rulers, it would be easy to join the richer flock of geese who fatten on the general common, bare as it is pecked! who hiss at all animals, not of themselves.

CHRISTMAS EVE.—The weather though fine grows very cold: it freezes. I ran off this morning to secure a seat in one of the four or five diligences running twice daily to Toulon, about 40 miles (70 kilomètres); at all the offices but a single place left, and in the worst part, the *rotonde*. Anxious to see as much of the mountainous country as possible between these great neighbouring cities, I avoided night travelling. This Toulon diligence sets off punctually from the Cour St. Louis at half-past eleven, well packed; seven of us in the rotonde; it was meant for six small persons, but a good woman contrived to have her little daughter of ten or eleven years old on her lap, into the bargain, with various bundles. The fare is very moderate—only four shillings; baggage not weighed, which I was surprised at, as well as nothing being expected by the conductor. We leave Marseilles passing to the south east, by the village of St. Loup; the road not

Digitized by Google

bad, the country and views varying every moment, delightful rocky mountains everywhere framed in the picture; along meadows, vineyards, stone walls and water-courses. We relayed pretty often. At *Aubonne*, a good large village, we begin to creep upwards to one of the several mountain passes on this road, a pretty long but not steep ascent. They have lately established an electric telegraph on this road; the fir poles, of about twenty-five feet high, are in some places giving way to the tension of the wires, where the angle was too acute; at such points it would have been easy to have set up stouter poles; some of those giving way already were braced to the nearest tree or rock by supporting wires; but it is evident this oversight must be made up for, and at double trouble and expense.

This, the only highway connecting the coastline between the two cities, has been of late years much bettered in its zigzags of ascent and descent, by viaducts, bridges, and blasting away rocks round some of the most difficult places. All this coast round the Mediterranean is mountainous, with very short intervals of plain, till beyond the gulf of Spezzia it lowers to the valleys of the Arno.

I was not sorry that we made no stop beyond changing horses, anywhere: now and then, in the two steepest passes, two or three additional horses were put to ("renforts"); but the ascent was nowhere steeper than

Digitized by Google

what we should trot up or down; in France, the least rise in the road brings the horses to a walk.

One might be eloquent on the beauty and grandeur of these mountains, were not eloquence itself tiresome sometimes. What exquisite pictures for amateur painters, if they could set up their easel, by the road side, or perched on some gray limestone rock, among the pines, the olives, and wild thyme of the hills! All the lower country as we came along is, however, well wooded in oak, elm, chestnut, &c., but particularly the track of the pretty river Olhonne, along the banks of which our road lay as far as *Aubonne.*

From the top of the first defile we look down on the plain and town of *Cuges.*

Here, for the first time in my life, I see them cultivating capers; in small conical mounds, much as sweet potatoes are in America. In all this route there is a most careful industrious husbandry on all sides; no half acre of ground is anywhere lost, up to the vertical bare rocks; in terraces, on the slopes where the vine peeps out through their loose stone walls; between the rows of vines, particularly on the plains, they sow a strip of wheat or other grain, sometimes Indian corn or vegetables. The vines themselves, in their stumpy knotted stems, look of an everlasting age; self-supporting, and not staked as in the north of France; their last summer shoots, now trailing bare on the ground, are cut down

Digitized by Google

at different periods during the winter, and made up into small faggots to light fires with. Beyond Cuges, which is not quite half way, we have another long ascent along a very rich picturesque country dotted with farms and hamlets, but above all made interesting by the more distant mountains which increase in magnitude. Five miles short of Toulon, at Olioles, we descend through their closing defiles, with the rocks close above the road for hundreds of feet; but here night closed in on us, so that I could not make out the immediate vicinity of Toulon; all however partaking of the same features. We did not arrive till after seven o'clock; they repeated fifty times most confidently that we should be there by five; but at coach and steamboat offices they seem determined never to tell the truth; they knew very well we should be two hours longer, as a matter of course. At a hamlet on the road we were asked for our passports by a gendarme; and at the gate of the town were made to give them up, to be sent for next day to the police office. This is the beginning of the passport tyranny, which goes on getting more intense and provoking up to its perfection of insolence at Naples.

We were driven into a little square, "Place au Foin," bordered with trees, and boasting a rustic fountain, crown'd gracefully by intertwined dolphins, to the coach office, next door to the (said to be) best hotel,

Digitized by Google

the "Croix de Malte." M. Castan, the landlord, speaks English very fairly, but does not understand it much, as he has never been in England. This hotel is extra French. Here all we English put up, recommended by Murray's book; and here come a good many of the French naval officers; — as to the George at Portsmouth. The house is very dark; bright as the sun is, one cannot make out the various maps and sketches hung up along the low entrance, nor read or write in the salle à manger, if there were any means or appliances for such a thing; but along the whole length of its two low dining-rooms, as usual in France, the various restaurant and table d'hôte tables are always laid. A sunshiny and bitter cold Christmas Day passes off dull enough, without even the satisfaction of a good fire or good dinner. The landlord has been connected with forges or ironworks, and to my surprise tells me that it is a mistake to suppose their iron-masters opposed to free trade! that on the contrary they wish it. This, however, is certainly contradicted in all reports on the subject, and forms the chief excuse for the French government's exclusion of our iron and metals; those excessive and killing duties are however relaxing a little, in the same way as ours on their wines.

Toulon is rather a small town; strictly confined on three sides within its fortifications, opening out only on the harbour face in a straight line of half a mile, on a

Digitized by Google

clean, well paved, broad quay; at the north west end of which is the arsenal or dockyard. About the middle of the quay is the townhall; and an old man of war, the "*Finisterre*," moored; fitted up as an office for certain naval authorities; a kind of receiving-ship, a temporary *violon* or lock up too for sailors, and as a mark beyond which, towards the dockyard, merchantmen and coasters must not make fast, load, or unload. At this spot there is a handsome bronze colossal statue of the genius of the sea, pointing with a fine determined expression to seaward. On the pedestal are various figures in relief, expressive of commerce, and tablets with the names of distinguished navigators and inventive geniuses; among others I observed Watt, Davis, Cook, Drake, Dampier, &c., others again stretching into the remote and classic ages of Greece and Egypt.

This sunny quay is full of sailors (men of war's men) just now the three decker screw "*Napoleon*" (flush upper deck) has part of her men quartered in the dockyard and they outnumber the others. A frigate-steamer, the Montezuma, starts to-day for Senegal; an old admiral and two or three other naval friends come down to bid the captain farewell, and his lady, I think; kisses on the cheek are returned all round; the men toss up their oars, of a double-banked cutter, and the coxswain gives them the time with his *call;* the third whistle is "give way;" all the sailors are neatly and exactly

Digitized by Google

dressed in blue jacket and trowsers, the shirt down over the collar, with anchor buttons, and black glazed hats with the name of their ship on the band, the ends hanging Jack-fashion behind; all this they have taken from us, but it is much more precise and regular.

Their sailor "cannoniers" have a blue tunic or frock coat, their number and name worked in red. A large frigate, the "Urania," has just anchored; her captain has come on shore in a large double-banked yawl or cutter, sixteen oars; the men in white shirts with the collars trimmed with blue stripes; some lady relative was sitting waiting his return in the stern sheets, made more ample in its dimensions than any our frigates possess. This boat must have been at least twenty-five feet keel, and from eight to nine feet broad.

They are about to lengthen one of the line of battle ships after our fashion, and have a screw fitted; I doubt very much the wisdom of lengthening men of war for steam; to say nothing of the enormous expense, as sea boats they are made weaker and spoilt; what they may possibly gain in speed is hardly a set-off to make up for it, or for a requisite handiness; besides, a man-of-war, or any vessel, should have other qualities more essential than mere swiftness.

I observe on our parts a general tendency towards long, low, narrow structures for steamers; in a heavy sea-way it is the most helpless and unsafe build pos-

Digitized by Google

sible; even in the smoothest river navigation, if they gave them flatter floors and more beam it would be infinitely better both for speed and safety: all our new iron boats are detestable; besides, their incapacity, their speed is no great things. In violent contrast with the general well-dressed and trim appearance of the French men-of-war's men, I was sorry to see, where indeed one would least expect it, the jolly-boat men (of a schooner yacht at anchor a little way off) unshaved, unwashed — any how, in dirty banyans, as bad as if in a collier clearing coals.

The *fast* gentleman owner, and his lady, a fine tall girl, stepped into his boat, just as the French man-of-war boat pushed off. This, on a bright festival,—Christmas Day! We are the most anomalous creatures on earth! It put me in mind of an eccentric lord some years ago (looking, with his thin cane-coloured beard, very much like good master Slender), going about our watering places, out of his yacht, dressed up like his men, in a frowsy red woollen banyan, and cap to match. But surely, however such poor distinction may go down at home, we should be careful about all sorts of affectations abroad! Our yachtmen are generally smart enough.

Here everything is naval and military, much as at our Portsmouth; but much more decent, orderly, and strictly regulated than with us. All the Government

Digitized by Google

sailors uniformly and well dressed; no drunkenness, no quarrelling; nothing to be seen in the streets to shock the most delicate sense of good manners and propriety.

Such indeed was the case at Marseilles. Here the streets, however, are kept much cleaner, and lively streams rush down the gutters from the fountains in the leading thoroughfares — the streets, "Royale," "La Fayette," and "Chaudronier."

I am often asked by the little fellows who clean boots and shoes in the streets (as is the fashion everywhere in France), if I want a *commissionaire* to go of any errand. Here the girls clean shoes on the wharf —to me a new picture of female industry.

The watermen who ply on the quay are very civil, and well regulated; their boats strong and large, with one lateen sail. These boats, like those at Marseilles, are very high and broad, not easily upset or swamped, with a row of paving stones for ballast; but such is their solidity and width, that it would be very difficult to upset them under sail; and, though three times as large as our wherries, it is remarkable how well a single man manages them; always keeping his mast stepped, and yard up, ready to make sail to the breeze, which generally prevails in the outer harbour.

I was recommended to see *St. Mandrier*, hospital and forts, on an outer point about four miles off, across

Digitized by Google

the mouth of the outer harbour. The wind was pretty fair, but blowing rather hard; so by the time we got to the left-hand fort opposite the outer guard-ship (vessels entering pass close to, and are hailed by, this guardo, a corvette), opening the harbour's mouth, which appears land-locked from its centre, we found the sea rather rough, as we cut through it, sending the spray over us. In addition to this salt wetting, it came on to rain; so that, what with a December coolness in addition, I gave up the pleasure of it; we put about and returned. I was glad to find no *permit* required; my man answered for me, passing the guard-house on the north wall of the inner harbour. This trip, which lasted nearly an hour, cost but a franc, which is the regulated fare by the hour, not that I specified by the hour; and the waterman was well content.

So much for sensible, clear regulations; the good, whatever it may be, (and the pleasure,) is enhanced on both sides. Besides, in lighting on "*Patron Vincent*" (my waterman), I found an intelligent fellow, not a bad sea cicerone. He pointed out various things to me: the "Murion" frigate (now the flag-ship), which brought back Napoleon from Egypt; —the convict hulks (they have 4000 "forçats" here, chiefly in the dock-yard); showed me the fort on the opposite side of the harbour's mouth on the hill, where early in life Napoleon distinguished himself as captain of artillery;

Digitized by Google

completing his battery in a single night. It appeared to me too distant to be very dangerous to men-of-war going in or out, but appearances are not always to be trusted.

Looming in the distance beyond this tongue of land, the famous Cape Sicie is seen,—a cape, during our long naval war with France, abhorred of British sailors, from the frequent adverse gales off it, (our fleet watching the Toulon fleet.)

I must try and give some general idea of this great sea-port. The town itself, within its bastions, is on a flat, which sweeps round the harbour westward, forming the bay; but the mountains rise immediately at the back of it, almost in a semicircle, very grand and bold in their outline, and rocky and sterile enough; supplying inexhaustible quarries: for about a mile in width towards them, it is full of villas, gardens, vineyards, and country houses, still on the rise,—till meeting the small pines which everywhere grow at the bases of the higher ranges of rock. The city itself confined by its fortifications is small, and long suburbs have sprung up on the roads east and west; they talk of throwing down the old walls, and taking extended lines, now much required.

Most travellers, who will give themselves the trouble, see the great lion here, the dockyard; but the thing is hedged round with so much formality, that it requires

Digitized by Google

some patience. The naval officers here, and indeed wherever I have met them, show no wish to be civil or assist one to anything; they are not impolite, but they only speak to each other. Here, in this hôtel, day after day, I sit near them at dinner; but though I am evidently a stranger, and English, not one has opened his mouth, nor can I well break the *ice*.

To see the dockyard a permit is required: given by the captain at the "*etat major*" with the additional clog of a "*planton*" or petty officer, to show you about, and to expect a fee. It rained yesterday in the afternoon, after I got the said permit, which, when I presented it, was refused at the gate; being without my bear-leader or planton, who did not choose to come before half-past twelve; when, as it rained, I consulted my own feelings, and did not return to the office. To-day I betake myself once more to the Place d'Armes where the office is, and find I must have a new permit, the planton annoyed at my not returning in the rain yesterday. So cap in hand, once more to his excellency, the triton of the minnows and sea captain.

Talking to his sea friends (other captains), he signs a second, and in due time I get in, but the best part of the day lost. My clog of a man began telling me that two and two made four, I begged him just kindly and simply to tell me if we came across anything new, but in short, there was nothing new. All very well and

Digitized by Google

neatly arranged; and the warehouses, lofts, rope-walk, building slips, admirably solid. The work-shops, steam machinery, forges, all well adapted to their various purposes. The armoury ingeniously arranged in pistols, muskets, daggers, &c.; but without the minié rifle. So of the mast-houses, masts, yards, tops, spars. The rope manufacture is by steam, and of great extent.

The model-room had nothing very striking; all the models old, and much entirely gone by. In the carving branch, nothing new; some of the old ornaments, however, fine, and in the best taste. No monstrosities in wood by way of figure-head, such as one sees too often laboriously deforming the cutwater of our men-of-war. But the French are not so profuse of late years of their beautiful figure-heads and carvings. Iron tanks, chain cables, parks of guns, sixty and eighty pounders (paixhans), shot in piles, &c., ranged on the north-west side of the great basin, which has room for all their fleet, great and small: several two and three deckers and frigates lay in tiers, the steamers ranged on the outer face; all large fine vessels. Among the men-of-war, I went on board of but one,—the Napoleon, screw, of 960 horse power. Sailor sentinels, bayonet in hand, stopped us, till leave was obtained of the lieutenant on deck. The engine-room seemed to me much too confined, but they are at this moment making alterations. One cannot judge of a man-of-war in dock

Digitized by Google

or repairing; the decks lumbered, and everything temporarily displaced: most things done afloat seem copied originally from us.

They talk, as of a thing decided, enlarging the town by razing the present curtains and bastions, and renewing them in a more extended semicircle.

It is certainly much wanted, as its extent is insignificant for a place of so much importance; and how magnificent its situation! It seems to me impossible to exaggerate the beauty and excellence in every way of the sites of Marseilles and Toulon, both backed and surrounded by noble mountains, forming inexhaustible quarries for every possible building.

Both cities are supplied in profusion by an overflowing abundance of sparkling, clear fresh, water; Toulon, from springs from the rocks of the mountains in the immediate vicinity. The land for miles round the shore is fruitful enough, on its rocky bed, for all the purposes of country seats and kitchen gardens; without that damp and exhalation of more extended and fatter plains and meadows, as with us. Hay and vegetables are rather scarce and dear, and inferior to ours; but the comparison should be with our sea ports. However, in the absence of grass and hay, their horses have plenty of corn of all sorts. Even in this cold scarce winter, it is pleasant to see the good care they take of their cattle.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. III.

QUIT TOULON. — DRAGUINAN. — CANNES. — RICH ENGLISH AND THEIR VILLAS, INCLUDING LORD BROUGHAM'S. — ANTIBES. — THE FRONTIER ON THE VAR. — NICE.

We have all heard so much of the sunny warmth of Hyères and its islands, though only twelve miles off on this same rocky mountainous coast, and in sight from any of these hills, that no wonder one fancies impossibilities; that the cold here and the discomfort of the hotels will be got rid of. The magnificent Hôtel of the *Golden Isles* ("*les Iles d'Or*"), is spoken of as something very fine and comfortable—what a contrast it must be to this *Croix de Malte*, where one vegetates under the iron and copper rule of a most abominable cook, and sulky or careless waiters. So, in spite of the civil blandishments of the landlord, I paid my bill, and took my place in one of the four diligences which run between the two places daily, for four o'clock. At these hotels they never tell you anything going on in the town; in vain you ask about what may be doing, or to see; they never know till too late, or after you have stumbled on the fact yourself. I did not like going so late in the day: by chance, at the *Porte d'Italie*, I found a small diligence putting to

Digitized by Google

its horses at noon; there was but a single place left—beside the driver outside with a most piercing north-west wind, it freezes hard in the shade); but I am tired to death of freezing in Toulon, so I send for my things, forfeit my four o'clock place, and get up beside my *Cocher*—luckily this cutting wind is in our backs; it is but a two hours' drive, going at a very slow pace. Indeed, as there are omnibuses as far *la Vallette*, a village a third of the way on, to walk the rest of the distance and beat this diligence "*à Depêche*" would be no great feat. I was recommended the Hôtel d'Europe by M. Castan, but it sounded very French and uncomfortable, besides I was curious and fascinated about the "*Golden Isles;*" and so in spite of my *Jehu* got down; and he wouldn't give me my baggage, but took it on to his bureau on the place; — as this very grand, good looking hotel is at the entrance of the town, at its west end. The landlord received me with that kind of equality-civility everywhere assumed on the Continent—just as if lord Somebody, or So and So, esq., at home, took it into his head to let out his rooms and keep a table at so much a day per head—merely as a whim to please himself; but here all similitude ends, for nothing can be more mean or uncomfortable than a French hotel. They may live by the English for a life, but never by any chance do they stumble on, or condescend to understand, any of our

Digitized by Google

ways, our habits, our manner of living, our ideas of comfort, our anything.

I soon left the *Golden Islands*. The turning to ashes of the apples of the Dead Sea cannot be a greater disappointment; the only good room I saw was the *salle à manger* in this cold comfortless hotel, where the least possible appearance of a tiny wood-fire flickered occasionally at the further end; the weather freezing, and the whole house exposed to the full force of the north-west rushing winds down the hill side. Wood is sold here at a most exorbitant price, and perhaps tenfold more exorbitant at these hotels.

By way of compelling you to have a fire in your bedroom, they take care to have no fire anywhere else: this was one of the cunning devices of the landlord. There is a supposed *salle de societè*, or drawing-room, for the company—a small room feeling like a well,—where the miserable little wood-fire is lit a few minutes only before we rise from table of an evening, and evidently not meant to give the slightest particle of warmth; as it is allowed to go out in half an hour, if one has the resolution to sit starving before it so long. The table is thoroughly *French*, as they all are, though more than half the inmates are English; and is nor bad nor good, the wine included (worth four sous the half bottle) at three francs and a half. One must eat of everything, like it or not, half cold as it is, or get no dinner at all.

Digitized by Google

Thus, one begins with hot water as a soup, a bit of dry beef, next a herring or mackerel, a cutlet (each portion brought round, little more than a mouthful), then fried potatoes. Next (second course), perhaps a capon, a salad, a rice *cake*, an apple, a fig, cheese, and in this way one sits and fills,—to dine is quite impossible. The French dine *à la bonne heure*, but us! we unhappy devils driven by fate or our own restless spirits to be victimised on the Continent! by the bienveillance of the police and hotel keepers. But I forget myself, and I forget Hyères, the delicious and rural Hyères of the south of France, on the sunny shores of the blue Mediterranean, — true, most true. The sun does shine more than in this sombre season with us under our murky canopy of smoke in London — a little more than at Torquay; but I deny that it is so warm — the cold is intense, every rivulet is frozen, one cannot face the wind. However, this is an unusually severe winter; here all the oranges seen in the trees of the gardens beneath the town are frozen and spoiled, still they look pretty; so do the poor palm trees on the little walk or *place* in the centre of the town, and here and there in the gardens; it speaks of the east and of warmth; so, too, the cactus, and a border of roses here before the hotel terrace, though frozen stiff.

Hyères is a good large town (nestled under its hill, surmounted by its pile of picturesque rocks, and ruins of a

Digitized by Google

chateau) of, it is said, nine or ten thousand souls. You see the sea and its islands, many miles in the distance south; the shore is at least three miles off, beyond the plains; which near the town is divided by stone walls and narrow wretched lanes, all mud and ruts; and next into meadows, vineyards, pastures, and finally marsh. Indeed most of this plain is a swamp, so that at least during the winter there is no getting to the beach except by the raised bank of the little river which runs into the bay between the two salines (salt pans) or lagunes, where they make salt; that to the right being the tongue of land running out to the *Presque Isle.* The sea-side itself, though pretty wild, with its cattle, sheep and goats, grazing in the border meadows, and a homestead or two, is prettier than the intermediate space. Fishing boats come in to the little river's mouth, and a dozen or two of coasters may be generally seen at anchor near the eastern saline, or under sail in the bay. I should say at once (and they confess the fact), this extent of marsh below the town cannot be healthy, — it spoils Hyères. As to the islands seen in the horizon, nobody lives on them, beyond a few poor fishermen, &c. They lie some six or eight miles off the coast, and are not easily got at, even in summer excursions, of which they make a great display here in printed bills stuck up; but contrive each *promenade* or excursion at as expensive

Digitized by Google

a rate as possible, whether on horseback, *en voiture*, or by boat to seaward.

The French themselves acknowledge that, as far as the town goes, no one thing is done to encourage the residence of strangers, either for health or pleasure. The streets on the hill-side are miserable, narrow alleys, ill-paved and dirty; even the main street through the town is hardly passable beyond the "Place Royale." The little stream down the valley, brought by an aqueduct along the road, and supplying the gardens below and the washerwomen, is the only nice thing one sees as a public ornament and convenience. The houses are nearly all old and solid, but without a single beauty or convenience, except a few terraces facing the south, which their owners have run out from the backs of their first floors or roofs, by way of promenade for their invalid guests. This "terrace *au midi*," is always advertised as the one thing most attractive, nor can one be insensible to the attraction—most especially this cold weather. The sun is ever welcome—its rays, though mid-winter, are still felt most pleasantly, with the orange trees full of their oranges looking beautiful, and a palm here and there. Here and there too the dark green of the cypress fir, and as usual the prodigality of stone walls, make a rich *coup d'œil* from one's window. I speak of hills, but in fact all this part of France is mountainous, and very beautiful in the distance they are—here, too, they

Digitized by Google

come down to the shores, between distances of a few miles of plain, as it is here; they block the way by diligences to the east—ordinary travellers have to return to Toulon and thence to *Draguinan* (" *Chef Lieu*") to get at Cannes and Nice, by the high road, and common diligences starting daily. After two weeks' endurance, and affected cosmopolitan patience, in this the first month of this blessed year 1854, half frozen except when wrapped up in bed, I am getting rather tired of Hyères. I confess, had my hands and feet not been so constantly benumbed, and my back be-iced, by the draughts through the wide open doors, I might have extracted some amusement from some of the heterogeneous French individuals at the Hôtel d'Europe, where I shifted, and where there was a kind of club, headed by a dried up *demi-solde vieux décoré colonelo.* Formally introduced (paying for the same), here we sat between the smoke of two fires, the miserable fire of roots, and the fire of indefatigable pipes and cigars. Some played at cards, some billiards: at night the chief fun was putting sous on cards, as a lottery; the prizes consisting of pheasants, snipe, ducks, teal, &c. These were the standing dishes not cooked, spread out on one of the tables. The mirth and merriment consisted in winning; and burst out, though rarely, with surprising force. Another small room of this hotel was devoted to reading, when one could catch any papers or any fire; both on the

Digitized by Google

most attenuated scale. As this was the only one in the town, an occasional Englishman came in to look at an old Galignani; but it would be ungrateful to forget a little peppery French *soi disant* merchant, who kept me from being quite torpid; he was in a constant hot argument about everything with everybody; he was particularly knowing about us *Englis*, our manners, and customs, and could say "ver well, sare," "I tank you ver mush;" but he decided against our *bifsticks* as not at all equal to French ones,—however, he thought better of our government and constitution.

Never was there a more miserable town in so pretty a country. There are no roads anywhere, no walks, except in the mud down the lanes between stone walls, and rushing side rivulets, which divide the road, such as it is, with the deep ruts: they are never mended, or the least thing done in the town for cleanliness or even decency. There are, indeed, walks upwards to the Chateau and rock above the town, and paths lead about among the hills, scrambling along the rocks up and down; but climbing in this way, though very pleasant, to see the views on every side infinitely varied at every step, soon tires; and after once or twice—enough. The place is anti-social. What the few English families may do, I know not; they have it all to themselves—if delightful. But were it only the marshy level which for three miles cuts off the sea from the place, I'll none of it;

Digitized by Google

so, I get back to Toulon, preparatory to going further on, to *Draguinan*, the prefecture of the department, quite out of the way among the hills; — so as, round about, to get at *Cannes* and *Nice*, as I have said.

Back to Toulon by half-past ten, and find no diligence starts till seven in the evening; mean time I take a boat and pull out once more across the "*petit rade*" to look at the town and surrounding mountains for an hour; my late boatman (Vincent) employed elsewhere, I take another — equally intelligent. He says the *Murion* frigate flag guardo at the harbour's mouth, is not the *veritable* frigate which brought Napoleon back from Egypt. She was broken up, and this one takes her name. That the Marine Hospital, chapel, gardens, and defences at St. Mandrier, which I see outside near the western point of the outer harbour or roads, are very fine; in fact, they occupy a large space, and are doubtless considerable.

Once more on the sunny quay, I see and get into one of the little quaint steamers (such machines!) going off across the harbour to *la Seyne*, a small town across the bay. The deck is filled by about thirty persons: the fare across four sous, not without music; a little boy tunes up his fiddle, and sings us a romance, — collects his sous, then sings a second; makes his bow and descends into the cabin — to his friend a sort of cabin boy. Two men manage these boats; with their small

Digitized by Google

feeble engine, they go about as fast as one might walk, perhaps five miles an hour—the distance about four miles across; the captain told me it took an hour and quarter to walk round by the road out of the town.

The town of La Seyne is a great building place for their merchant ships and iron steamers; there were six in the little square harbour, afloat and building, and three or four others on the stocks, of timber—all fine vessels—one for the Spaniards. This little passage steamer only remains half an hour.

Later in the afternoon, I walked out of the Porte de France westward, round the new part of the dockyard recently added, called the arsenal "*Castigneau*" (over the gate). It stretches about a mile along the bay to the west; the plain west of the town is all marshy below the hills and mountains, from the defile where we come out on it by the high road at *Les Olliouilles;* there is an inlet or creek near the new wall—western boundary of the dockyard—on its banks I see they are carting earth, and forming detached mounds for forts.

The workmen were coming out of the yard from work (four o'clock) in good round numbers. But it is time to take my place in the diligence—so the day, though so tedious, is at length too short—impressed with many excellencies of this place, and a good many salient defects.

To lose one's rest or sleep is nothing, but to see

Digitized by Google

nothing of the country, to me the only pleasure, as we creep along, is vexing enough. The fare to Draguinan is very moderate, seven francs, baggage included; strictly, I believe, they could charge something, for my trunk is not so light. We walk, creep, half our way — the least rise from a dead level brings a small trot to a creep. In short, the diligences *impériales* always go on getting worse and worse, the farther off from Paris; as to any assured time, it is a farce. We got to Draguinan this morning, 16th January, at eight o'clock, just thirteen hours; nearly a level road; for we avoid all hills, leaving them on either side. Were it worth while, they could easily make a railroad to the "*chef-lieu*" of this department of the *Var*. We drive into the yard of the Hôtel de la Poste — a villanous bad one, where we get a vile bason of café au lait, good bread and no butter — and are told that we shall go on by the next diligence, due at ten, which comes another road direct from Marseilles. All the morning lost waiting; at twelve nearly, it does really make its appearance. I walked about the town, which is prettily situated in its valley at the foot of picturesque hills — a small, poor place, as a *préfecture*, but it is improving; there is a battalion of infantry; the band on parade strikes up as we leave the hotel. They have their Palais de Justice (assizes just begun), their gardens, Hôtel de ville, theatre, jail, barracks, and all those public buildings indispensable in their chief towns; plenty of running streams and fountains from the small

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

J. W. OLDMIXON, R. N.

M. & N. HANHART, IMP.

BARRACKS AT SCUTARI, FROM OVER MOSQUE AT TOPHANA

Digitized by Google

river which runs through this valley. But who ever hears of *Draguinan!* The French abuse it, as insufferably dull, of course—still, dull indeed are all their towns: this has perhaps fifteen thousand souls. The country round is very pretty—though I am getting rather tired of olive trees—the firs keep on the mountains; but I will not have this out of the way place abused—no, only the Hôtel de la Poste; but not its pretty young landlady, whom I saw returning from morning mass, very smart and smiling.

We are still little more than half way to Cannes, and go back as we came for two mortal leagues!—still not on the high road, the "route d'Italie," which we hit about three o'clock (and a very good road it is), and shortly pass through Frejus. They are planting their electric telegraph posts ready for the wires. We were an hour and a half climbing, by very gentle ascents, zigzag, up the Estrelles mountains; about half way down them a gendarme asks for our passports, and actually insists on seeing them—at Frejus, left behind, we had been asked for them, but, more polite, the gendarme was content with seeing one or two—how vexatious this absurdity!—I always shirk it when I can; but this animal was a new broom, I conclude—he was little the wiser, after delaying us ten minutes! Altogether, we did not drive into *Cannes*, along its level plain, till ten at night—past all dining! past all remaining patience—and yet was it charming to see with what good humour a young French-

Digitized by Google

man took it, with his pretty young wife, his newly-come little heiress, and their nurse and bonne! This was a delightful family group—both husband and wife wrapped up in their infant!—the respectful familiarity of their servants:—altogether I bid them a "bon voyage," as I got down at another *Hôtel de la Poste*, with regret; their prospect of getting to Nice before three in the morning, excellent as the road is, very slender; and their little one and themselves, quite worn out by two nights' and days' want of rest, packed up in the "*interieur*" —no trifle.

I hug myself at the idea of having escaped a dreadfully severe winter at home, and in the north of France; yet here all is cold and comfortless — I have run away from good fires and carpets, to freeze on brick floors. Who is it that has written, almost poetically, of this little town of Cannes; and the sun, and the sea, and the country round it? But hungry, at ten o'clock at night — one's patience and romance quite worn out — driven to a great barrack of a Hôtel de la Poste, all cold, comfortless *carreau* — though indeed the ocean breeze is rather mild — who, I say, but must have all his sunny, poetic ideas put to flight?

O, the miseries, the abominations of a French hotel! If they grow rich by us, after years of close-fisted and very positive extortion, still they never, by any chance, get one single English idea!— not a single thing, down

Digitized by Google

to the smallest item, but remains virgin French or Italian, as perfect as in the middle ages, or a century or two ago. Here is a flagrant example! — this same *Cannes*. The landlord explains that they don't want fires,—O no, it is only freezing!—the sunny side of the house, which hardly has ever a sunny side, blocked out to the south by recent buildings our cash has erected! "No chimneys the sunny side," quoth he,—"but behold," (after I have satisfied my hunger in a chilly room, on the bare carreau, on a bit of *gibelotte de lièvre* which I hate, and not a vegetable, cold or hot,) "here," ushering me into the *salle-à-manger*, "here we have a fire, as you see!"—the usual fire of these precious barracks — of roots, heating the back of the fireplace, at which sat a solitary Scotchman, in a white neck-cloth — perhaps in full dinner dress! I forget to say this same civil landlord had previously asked me "if I had *dined well!*" (on the head and paw of a jugged hare, and plenty of bread!) — O! "*merci*"— all this by the way — not against the country round Cannes, its pretty sea face, and bay, its mountains in the distance, westward the Estrelles, capped by snow, and, adding to its beauty — the peculiar beauty of this whole southern shore of France — that is, rocky mountains, framing in various valleys and plains, fertile in olives, mulberries, figs, oranges, and grapes, striped with wheat — few vegetables or esculent plants, fewer gardens, and a rich

Digitized by Google

abundance of stone walls all round their towns, roads and lanes.

Half way here the cork trees begin, and though the olive, which everywhere forms the chief thing seen, is rather dull and monotonous, and not pretty as a tree, still here they are seen in great perfection, three times the size they are about Hyères, Toulon, or Marseilles.

Not only Lord Brougham, but several other rich Englishmen, smitten by the place, or by his lordship's propinquity, have, and are, building expensive villas here; the best houses are generally occupied (as they are everywhere) by the resident English — whose fortunes, spent here, operate all that one sees of recent improvements, and the better sort of new streets and new houses; besides a new mole they have run out to shelter the west side of the harbour.

The whole bay outside is horseshoe shaped — abrupt mountains of the Estrelles chain west. Towards Nice the level plain, off which, sheltering the bay to the east, is seen the little Island of St. Margarite; where 150 Arab prisoners (of Algiers) are still confined in a fort. From the ruin of an old castle on a rock over this mole, one sees the whole town and country. Lord Brougham's villa and the rest of the English houses westward, close in the suburbs — their grounds, of no great extent, walled in — a sort of large gardens, shaded by their fine olive trees; I see some few orange

Digitized by Google

trees, but no palms, nor any *lawns*. In fact, the summers of this clime burn every thing up — lawns, like our green Axminster carpets, roses, geraniums, pinks, such as ours, in such beauty and infinite variety, impossible — still, of course, they have roses (mostly Chinese), but nowhere does one see that constant and exquisite care or neatness in any thing — only seen in dear old England. O, land of my fathers, how art thou abused! — not by me, who love thee but too well: — thy sylvan shades, thy glens, thy fields, thy woods, thy thickets, lawns, and streams; thy myths through the mists of fable; thy sylvan shades, peopled by shadows of our godlike bard — fairies in the train of thy loved Titania!

There, there the soul melts — and anon roused to anger at the lords of thy soil, — at thy much cramped and abused energies!

Not so, sayest thou! — where then are our gay sylvan scenes? — where the garlanded May-pole, the manly Morris dance? — where the games of adolescent youth? — where the village dance on the village green? Yes, a flock of poor geese, tended by an ill-fed, ill-clothed little girl! or, browsing, the skin-and-bone donkey of some ragged poacher —

> "Our country's pride, when once destroyed,
> Can never be supplied!"

or idle, desperate youth, swiping in tobacco smoke at the

Digitized by Google

beershop, too lucky to be at last enlisted out of harm's way — yes, better than the workhouse, or poaching, or robbing. Australia and the diggings are only for the easier few, not quite beggars, who save and turn to cash their little all, to pay their passage — and leave at home the impossible refuse of the land to plague and puzzle the titled and rich few, who talk of morality and heaven! Ye gods, how they can talk!—but they can see all this in the streets, at their gates, as they sit on their magistrate's bench to administer the law. Yes, there is plenty of law, such as it is; it fills our jails well, and swells (as a sole revenge on aggressors) our town and country rates — from which some few escape *here*, and all over the continent! Why not tax them for it?— that would be the last and wisest of our thousand taxes —good master chancellor of the exchequer; cogitate a little on a good tax on these selfish exiles who fatten France! I shall be well content to be included; for I have serious thoughts of being looked down on anywhere rather than at home — why looked down on? why mortified, humiliated? Why? — is it not intolerable to be despised, and banished our best, nay, our only tolerable circle! — to be a nobody — to find title or riches the only passport possible — that a few hundreds a year and a small street keeps one for ever at a distance from every thing desirable. To see the same people prancing

Digitized by Google

for ever in the park, at the opera, at court, all strictly exclusive! —

"Whom not to know,
Argues yourself unknown."

And these are the best, the gentlest, the most noble of the land: —but I, and all the "*nobodies*" of dear old England, had much better be German, French, or Chickasaw, to have the smallest chance of a decent reception. I, in my turn, despise a pains-taking, half fellowship — to shake hands, perchance, *abroad*, and be *cut* at home! or asked to dine with a difference! — that sort of condescension, if vouchsafed capriciously to a *nobody*, of all acquaintance the most intolerable, which tells you your common Delf must not float down the stream beside gilt porcelain. Well, the sun shines, broad shadows flit over this rich scene, land and sea. I bask in the sun, and "worship Nature, up to Nature's God!" Round the roads and rocks there are many charming walks, both ways out of the town — on the road to *Grasse* too, and to *Le Cannè*, a village nestled under the hills to the north, clothed by firs, above the olive orchards and orange gardens: sheltered by these hills, the situation is even warmer than *Cannes*. The snow-capped mountains peeping above all in this direction, — the spurs of the Alps.

I see certain trees for the first time. The Caroba and

Digitized by Google

the cork tree, which is a variety of the Ilex. How wonderful, how bountiful the Almighty! Other trees *barked* die — this perhaps the sole exception. Many of the olive trees are still full of olives, not ripe yet, or not gathered, though autumn is the season; it is a tedious job, they beat them off the upper branches with long rods, industriously, patiently — women pick them up.

It is in vain looking for a book or a paper in any French country town; they know nothing, nor want to know; even of themselves: now here, at Cannes, our old books tell one, if I could recollect, more of the pith of things than our new. I don't know why I am rather disappointed with this town; it was of course most likely to be exactly what all French towns are; the site at any rate is charming — its nice little harbour, its granite hills behind capped by firs, with the more distant ones up to *Le Cannè*. Then fine olive orchards, and a good many orange trees in gardens; the fig and the vine in parterres — for it loves a stony soil — all this gives a richness to the scene round the town. Then the sea, and the abrupt mountains which close in the bay on the west, and the island on the east. The town itself, however, is miserable, except its one street, (the high road through it,) with its half-dozen greedy, uncomfortable hotels. There is a pretty esplanade open to the beach in front, full of boats, and lots of solid granite

Digitized by Google

benches, where all the Cannes poor quiet world sun themselves, great and small; here the women hold their fish, and vegetable, and fruit market; installed cobblers and small hucksters squat over their benches and baskets in rows. On the west side, on the quay proper, is a row of large houses under the old castle; at the further end of which is the new mole or pier, of about two hundred yards long; solidly and handsomely constructed, with its column lighthouse, just finishing, at the end of it; here, and at the west quay, lie a dozen polaccas or coasters; the bay outside is well sheltered too, except to the south-west; I see them unloading glazed tiles and pottery of good shape, for common kitchen purposes, made between this and Antibes — the tiles from Marseilles.

The bells at the campanella, or slender tower of the church (much here is quite Italian) are ringing in various moods from morning till night for baptisms, deaths, and merry peals, I conclude, for marriages — no, impossible—but what are they thus day after day constantly keeping up this clatter for? — O, a mere noisy custom, to add to the life of the town.

I saunter out on the high road westward, to have another look at Lord Brougham's, and Mr. Leader's to the right, Wolfield's and Sim's to the left next the water; a Niçard, a M. Favari, has a nice small pavilion and tower for sale, opposite Sim's, with half an acre of the hill side, and a right of path to the sea by the *old fort*

Digitized by Google

here (where the *Douaniers* have a station on the rock, over the sea); this is a very sweet spot, but he asks 36,000 frs. for it.

A Mr. Ripert, who calls himself Lord Brougham's intimate friend, showed me an olive orchard close by, of perhaps an acre; dog cheap, he says, at 8,000 frs. — pretty well! They all agree that land all about is rising, and has risen a hundred per cent. within these last seven or eight years; more now than ever, in consequence of the stability of government and the English building; all of whom have made a good spec by their earlier bargains, and others, residents in the town; but, after all, these prices are quite extravagant. He showed me his terraces near his house (to let) of *cassis*, the base, it seems, of most French perfumery; a single large bush, he said, gave him yearly 25 frs., and generally this extraordinary plant, something like a very large currant or gooseberry bush, yields 5 and 6 frs. profit yearly — it seems incredible, but may be true enough.

All those who have built here, a mile and a half out of the town, have secured their strips down to the sea (across the road), five hundred yards off, and have walled it in; generally the English have from one to three hundred yards frontage each. Mr. Wolfield is now building a second house, like a castle; finding his large house where he is, too near the sea; the constant surge disturbing them at night, *on dit*. But what a singular spectacle is

Digitized by Google

here — a little English colony of rich nobodies (all but *one*), sunning themselves in silence, and giving their wealth to invigorate the town's currency, aided by other English more or less birds of passage—one finds this now all over France and Italy. Cannes is full of delightful walks, once out of the town — to *Cannè*, and here, westward; — towards Antibes eastward.

I walked up the valley to Cannè yesterday very early, the morning delightful; nothing can be more varied and picturesque than these walks; one sees the mountains, covered with snow, just peeping over the firs of the most distant hills, while the sun towards noon is almost too hot.

Returning I overtook a handsome village belle, a simple, sensible creature, half peasant half demoiselle; she spoke French well; she had never been beyond her own little *Cannè*, except to Cannes; she was quite content at home, and little envied strange lords or rich strangers, who have settled here in fine houses—so our discourse was quite philosophical and very commonplace; but I believe, in her, perfectly sincere. "You see," said I, "all greatness is glad at last of a small room, and the sun in at his windows, and simple fare, and these rocks and firs to meditate on, and yonder sea—shut out from the world—the world of one of our many lord chancellors, retired on 4,000*l.* or 5000*l.* a year." But, I fancy, not exactly this one—and so, with a smile and

Digitized by Google

a bow, we parted as we entered the street. Some country woman (they all know each other, even from town to town) had stopped her to talk patois, which I can't at all make out; some of the words are Italian, some French, some Spanish,—but the jumble is Greek to me.

These hotels are enough to drive one away from a paradise, or drive one mad; so I pay my bill and wait for the advent of the forenoon diligence from Marseilles. Instead of seven, it did not arrive till near twelve at noon, and in an evil moment of impatience I bespoke a voiture of M. Renard, who keeps the café and diligence bureau opposite; and tells many fibs of the excellence of his voiture; and particularly insisted on by his good woman of a wife.

I was too hasty in closing my bargain—seven francs to St. Laurent, a small town on the french side of the Var—I should first have had a look at the turn out—such a rattletrap one rarely sees, even in France, and his little horse so lazy, it required incessant beating the whole way; equally unpleasant with our snail's pace; however, it was too late to refuse, so off we went.

This M. Renard, père, I found a most stupid creature, even more fool than knave; I asked him one or two questions as we went along, but I found it quite in vain. The day, however, was lovely, and the road and country: — all the way by the sea-side.

We see Antibes across the bay afar, and its light-

Digitized by Google

house on its high headland. Within a mile and a half of it we pass a column erected where Napoleon, in 1815, got on the high road along a narrow path from the beach where he landed; not liking to trust the town, which is inclosed by fortifications, with a detached fort very conspicuous, just outside to the east.

The road runs by its gates, and from this point Nice is seen at the extremity of another long sweep of the ocean and land to the east. Two miles short of St. Laurent (just beyond *Cagne*) the Antibes diligence overtook us, and I was too glad to get rid of my villanous vehicle, so shifted to it.

We were soon at this frontier town on the French side of the Var, where a long wooden bridge crosses this torrent river, and again changed coaches for a *Nice* omnibus (a "correspondence"). Here comers and goers are delayed an hour for passports (*à viser*) and luggage, reciprocal on both sides; with an absurd and most vexatious pertinacity and formality — how encouraging to travel!

Nice, it seems, is no longer a free port; and so they rumple, open, and displace all your things, and seize on the smallest trifle, if new, or paying a duty. By the way, I ever find the free governments or liberals on the continent quite if not more vexatious about passports and searching than the absolute — Sardinia is no better than Lombardy or Leghorn. The process too is enough

Digitized by Google

to break one's back, stooping over the clay floor of this precious custom-house at the *Nice* side. I had got a franc in my hand, ready to reward the searcher, whom I had watched for some minutes manipulating every single thing, down to the bottom, of a patient brother and co-mate in exile,—when it came to my turn — that is, if he would not insist on unpacking all my things. No; this must have been an immaculate new broom; diving down, he would open a tin case, in spite of my smiles deprecatory and assurances; so I repocketed my silver, and only bestowed on him my benediction.

Well, all this has an end—"time and the hour"! It was, however, dark when we got to Nice, and I was anxious to arrive by daylight. We pass the long and rather ugly western suburbs (the whole distance from the Var is about four miles), and enter the town by the newer side of the botanic garden, built of late years; the body of the city being across the bridge over the river Palione, and in five minutes one is in the heart of it, in the square of the barracks. The Hôtel York is the coach office, and thither I betook myself, just in time to sit down to dinner, which I thought all the better for a good large dish of mashed potatoes, which I perceived the French liked quite as well as us perfidious Albions.

Nice is on the shore of the ocean, exposed almost as much as Brighton, with a grey, rough, shingle beach,

Digitized by Google

where the surf plays incessant, more or less. The river Palione steals into it, hardly perceptible; serpentining through the west suburb along its own broad, dry gravel-bed, like all mountain torrent-streams, only filling it when swelled by the snow melting, or autumnal rains.

Washerwomen are everywhere now busy along its edges. Walking about the town, one would never suspect the small but excellent harbour on the east side; cut off by the Chateau Hill, which bounds the old town, whose rocks come down perpendicular 300 feet at the end of the Corso and terrace walk, the road round their base being cut away just enough to pass round them to the port; which has lately been improved by a solid, handsome pier, run out about two hundred yards at its mouth.

This suburb communicates round the northern base of this singular rock, with the streets and squares in the northern part of the town; and following on round its base, you find yourself once more on the quays of the Palione: much of this north side is, too, comparatively new; the old town being between the river, and the terrace, and Corso; called, in marking the streets, "*isola*" or *block* number so-and-so, a custom in other Italian cities.

Passing along the Poncietti, the carriage-road round the foot of the Chateau Rock to the port (all the

Digitized by Google

sea face, or southern aspects, have the finest houses, and where now, on both sides of the river, may be found most of the English residents here, and the largest hotels), on the harbour side, a carriage-road climbs this delightful rocky mound, which seems placed here on purpose to give one an exquisite view of the mountains round, the sea to Antibes, and the whole town at one's feet.

I much enjoyed the ramble along its walks: once up, it is a charming promenade, among its firs, its rocks, and its small level plain on the summit, of about three hundred yards square; where there is a sergeant's guard, and two pieces of cannon are mounted facing the west.

Subsequent to the middle ages this was the citadel, and commanded the town as of old, but was blown up early in this century when the French left it.

There is a wildness about the whole very refreshing, after crowded streets and town life; and the walk up of a morning more conducive to health and appetite, than all the medical men put together: but this is only for the strong, who are not here in search of health.

Nothing remains of this once "*chateau*," but a block or two of its giant walls toppled down from their elevations, and left where some jutting rock caught them *in transitu*, just as it should be. I hate castles and donjon keeps, except in ruins. Here and

Digitized by Google

there on the plain, indeed, one can trace parts of the substructure; and, on the very highest point, there is still some little of the wall left, holding fast to the primitive rock; it forms a little square stand on the west side, like an arm chair, from which the eye plunges down on the roofs towards the river Palione.

The mountains, which are chiefly to the east and north, form an amphitheatre, lowering as they come round towards Var: these are the spurs of the Alps. The more distant and highest, the Col di Tende, &c. peeping over, are capped by snow, enhancing the charm of all mountain scenery.

As we approach the great range, of course they grow higher, and so far Nice has something the advantage of the French towns already passed on this shore: otherwise the scenery here partakes very much of its features at Marseilles, Toulon, Hyéres, and Cannes; the country in the nearer suburbs, and the greener hills before they reach the rocks, hardly so rich or fine as in France; so it strikes me at first. Still I think the olives grow larger. I now and then see them here of great size, and bearing all the marks of very great age. They are said to reach from three to five hundred years; and still vigorous, only the trunks hollow.

There is one thing certainly in favour of Nice to our apprehensions, it is very clean compared with French towns, pretty free from those constant abominations,

Digitized by Google

everywhere such a nuisance in France, and which the French themselves, from the *bonne d'enfans* up to the polite world, seem totally insensible of.

Though Nice is so very near being a French town; full of French and us English in search of health, "or a truant disposition, good my lord!" yet is it like all Italian towns, far behind the go-a-head age we live in. The shops are poor things, so are their cafés, and the two reading rooms and libraries, said to be expressly for our accommodation, very indifferent indeed. A single copy of the *Times* and *Galignani* is eagerly snatched up, at Visconti's (corner of Corso at 5 fr. the month): all these places are only intent on selling us things out of their shops, at a dear rate, with much civility. I must, however, except the *Circle;* the club where strangers are politely admitted for a few days, or to subscribe.

Little Sivori is here, and gives concerts at the York Hôtel. The room was filled, — he, of all the great violin players, puts one most in mind of his master and friend, *Paganini;* his tone as fine; winding up with the *Carnival de Venice,* in a storm of applause. No wonder. Even those who can't bear a fiddle are in ecstasies. O! little body with a mighty soul is this same fiddle in such hands; how exquisite the tones, the modulation, the variety of effect! how astonishing the rapidity of execution! His one string (not that the other three

Digitized by Google

are taken off or touched) solo and harmonics seem as perfect as his great Maestro's were. Some man sang French mawkish romances, and a lady helped the programma out; but these interludes are all *de trop*, and only keep one waiting.

I must leave this York Hôtel; my bed-room, north, is cold and damp as a well. I get an apartment on the *Poncietti* over the sea, where the rock is blasted away perpendicular, — a row of houses under it: lodgings are dearer, if facing the sun, than in Paris. Yes, we come here after the sun, and in search of health, or, tired of everything, in search of variety; a variety we are soon tired of in turn. As to health, it is simply a mistake and a folly; nobody recovers—how should they? Nice nor any other spot can work miracles. Still, hope, deceitful, beckons on; and who would deny this last sad consolation to the dying!

So they are buried here, or hurry home once more to rest;— much less could ignoramuses enter into an argument with a physician, or accuse him of not telling the truth; they are here, as everywhere, labouring in their vocation to make money. If you go to a doctor, you must expect his story, his advice, and his medicine; as he in turn expects his fee.

There have been such things as a disinterested medical man: a goose of this order, in a most absurd sincerity, told an old lady who consulted him, that she

Digitized by Google

wanted nothing but exercise; far from being grateful, she sent for a rival, and he lost a good patient. How things go on here with our poor consumptive invalids, I know not; but clearly all medicine or consultations are, nine cases out of ten, utterly useless, if not absurd.

Besides the Circle and the two libraries, there is a "Casino" beyond the west quay and botanic gardens, which, by the way, is a little plot laid out at the mouth of the river, and made green with trefoil or tares. These Casino subscription rooms face the beach. There is a carriage-drive along the shore to the west, called the English road, by the garden-walls of the villas, whose back fronts skirt the high road (the suburb street). These gardens look inviting with their olive and orange trees, their palmettos, and their roses and geraniums still in flower; particularly that of Count Orestis; from the little peep I had through his waterside gateway: torrent water-courses between the garden walls (now dry) open out to the sea. This same beach is very broad, of grey flatish pebbles, with no smooth-water sand-margin as with us, and where the tides rise and fall; here there is very little change of tide. This fact alone seems to deprive the Mediterranean of something of its ocean-grandeur, though indeed all along this coast how beautifully clear it is in its pellucid pale blue play among the rocks! Many pretty coves and nooks below the perpendicular rocks here round to the harbour, invite one to strip, and plunge in.

Digitized by Google

There is quite a new quarter springing up behind the harbour, running into the road, along the channel of the Palione: many fine streets and squares already built, others building; trenching on the orange-groves of suburban villas; their owners finding more profit in selling building lots. I watch their walls rising, and their foundations, how solid, how honest, compared with the things which rise in our London, or any of our towns! These foundations, a full yard or more in breadth; the mortar excellent, while ours is little better than mud—with rare exceptions in select houses. I am absolutely afraid of my own flimsy gable end wall; and I am sure no district inspector ever once looked at it, as the act directs!

But, compared with the continent, I find everything among ourselves flimsy! flash—our whole world only live for show. What sincerity or what merit is there left among us, that is much cared for? Gold, riches, outward appearance, childish ostentation, reaches even our villages, and flaunts it in a garden-chair and satins, beside the miserable poor at 8*s.* and 9*s.* per week. Even our clergy affect fashion, and allow their wives to act the rural fine lady! Instead of at once applying a remedy to positive hideous evils, we amuse ourselves denouncing agression, and discussing High and Low Church! I try to explain the pleasant training of our young men at Oxford and Cambridge for the sacred

Digitized by Google

office of priest (sinking the riding about after foxes, and bagging game as a pastime!). But how explain such awful absurdities! I am met by an incredulous stare.

I take up the *Times* at Visconti's. Do I want any confirmation of our utter corruption and servility? It is stamped there, in its admirable leading articles, on every possible subject, most on our ten thousand injustices, absurdities and *jobs*. The *Times* can write about it and about it, in an affected fearless candour — things that no minister, no man, should suffer to go on so for a single day, — or quit the helm.

Yet, this very able *Times* is the organ of this or that very minister, and means that these dreadful things should go on; and they do go on. Woe be to that man who dares lift his voice, and put his finger on the particular plague spot! Like the M.P. of the Traveller's, he is instantly treated as an ass — with that shrivelling scorn, which is death politically; and these too apparently true mischiefs denied superciliously by a Court sinecurist. This high-bred pooh-poohing by a creature of the Court, vouched for by the new Government organ — so improbable! but things come to pass, and speak for themselves. Who is to *prove* an unconstitutional intermeddling? — where the watchword which begirts the palace and the Castle and all office! is — *silence!* Most of our journals, *pro* and *con*, are in turn

Digitized by Google

bought and sold; and, as the organs of political truth, are utterly contemptible.

I look with an anxious, inquiring eye on the particular good of the various places I come to — what do people get or enjoy here? As to health, it is all nonsense; as to society, why it is, as it may be, a matter of chance, to know pleasant people. Among the French or Italians, we are ever mere blundering children; among ourselves, we had better be at Brighton or Torquay.

Nice has a great many nice, nay, charming walks on all sides towards the immediate hills, and round the rocky shores to the east, once out of the dusty streets, and from among its narrow stone-walled lanes: — to Villefranche, and when there, say in a carriage (it is but two miles off) or on horseback, to take boat over across its fine harbour to the other side, and then walk across its olive orchards to St. John's; where, coming out on its cove, one finds oneself on the margin of the sea — on the edge of the cliff, very much resembling our own dear Devonshire cliffs. All here is rural, shady, and puts one much in mind of home, "sweet home!"

There is, too, a rural innocence and simplicity about the villagers, very charming — civil, kind. The "*bon jour*," on meeting — often the only pure French they can master — greets one at every turn. I thought the women mostly handsome, too — many of the young

Digitized by Google

girls fair and pretty. The town of Villefranche, on its steep hill side, is remarkably clean; many good houses. There is, too, a garrison and considerable fortress here. The harbour is magnificent, deep enough and capacious enough for any fleet, and safe from all winds, except, perhaps, the south-east, from whence gales are least likely to blow.

At other times, alone, I range along the rocky path round the rugged shore, beyond the harbour, which, too, is excellent for all vessels not requiring more than thirteen feet water; indeed, the port of Nice, though small, is most secure, easy, and excellent, and quite large and deep enough, in its clear rocky waters, for ten times the commerce likely to be encouraged here; since even very lately they have strangled its growing importance and usefulness. It is no longer a free port! Its freedom transferred to Genoa; such as it is, in which nothing is free.

From these eastern rocks, where one must scramble and jump for a footing here and there, keeping along the sea side, the whole sweeping shore of the grey beach along the front of the city, with its constant washerwomen's table cloths spread of drying clothes on the hot pebbles, is seen and is unique. One fancies the beach at Brighton allowed to be spread in this way, not that it does any harm, even in the idea, for it rather agreeably relieves the dull grey at the edge of the blue wave.

Digitized by Google

Nobody ever approaches this *façade* (at the terrace side a few fishing boats are hauled up on the beach), except on the western part, towards the English shore drive by the Casino, beyond the small "*Jardin des Plantes*," this recent little square at the sea end, and the more modern ranges of fine houses on the western side of the Palione, only date some twenty years back.

But I am musing, seated on some kindly rock just shut out from city, port, and all suburban villas, on this east and savage side. All here is grand and wild, as in time out of mind! and oh, how infinitely beautiful, as the sea lashes among the nooks and caves far below my feet!

This, indeed, speaks of heaven, and of eternity! here I sum up my own little term of life—drawing to a close.

"A puny insect, shivering at a breeze," indeed! and what are nations! what their heroes, whose good deeds have been — the better inflicting death and mischief on masses of us insects — the brimstone of the bee-hive. Fresh swarms burnt out, killed! busy, busy bees.— I see by the "Times" that that extra busy bee, Lord B., has left his cell at Cannes, to buzz in that other larger hive, the upper house. Well, I may thank my stars if I can obscurely gather honey here innoxiously from little wild flowers, which peep out and greet me from their little moss cells in the time-worn crevices of these marbles. How gloriously fantastic the shape of these worn rocks! how beautifully and infinitely varied.

Digitized by Google

Every farther step is a study for the mind, for a painter, and to me it is astonishing we have so few "*artists*" (I hate the word) who think it worth while to study new forms and scenes, and vary their monotonous productions. They seem but to go on copying themselves and each other—no matter how well—it might be so much better. No people, however, are so fond of the word "artiste" as the French, so prone to dress them out as geniuses — universal; where in fact, they have hardly conquered the a, b, c, of their trade, and evidently haven't an idea beyond their brush, their voice, or their fiddle-stick. Let them climb higher, and sit here awhile; or, on our own granite bulwarks round the Land's End.

How sad it is — being sad — to be by oneself,— quite alone, hardly speaking for days together! My spirits flag. Thus solitary, I have ample time to study external things here: how widely different would they appear to me, did I but know their people, and their language, the patois of these shores.

Things — proper, down-right every-day things — solid as stone walls, felt as the sunshine, or the rain, change their hue, like the chamelion, through the mind's mood. I go in and out of the "*Circle*," where an acquaintance has kindly put my name down, or at Visconti's, where one sees groups reading, with no more interest than groups of wax figures. How many of these men have nice homes here, pleasant society, all that makes life tolerable! I have fled from it, to wander and observe;

Digitized by Google

and commune with my own melancholy mind. 'Tis well I can read things beyond the ephemeral interest of newspapers, with all their pretensions, ignorances, and very cleverness, to lie like truth, and mark their changes, like the flying clouds.

I take up one of the last efforts of that prolific brain, M. de la Martine; his "*Graziella*" is a railway volume, wherein he recounts his youthful loves at Naples, in a charming style; the prose of poetry, and the poetry of prose. His simple narrative harmonises exquisitely with the beauty of the scene. The bay, the island of Procida, an old fisherman's family in which he became one of themselves for many months, in his eighteenth year (about the year 1810, while Murat was king). What a dream is this life! As we all do, De la Martine, in the decline of life, at his château St. Point, amid his quiet Burgundian vineyards, near Macon, looks back with an aching heart on his youth—on his once heartless ingratitude. For, dress up the story as he may, it is but too plain on the face of it—its internal evidence; the whole truth more leaks out in the anguish of a few poetic stanzas at the end, than in the careful studied simplicity of the tale. In those lines where the naked truth bursts out in tears—

"Allez* où va mon âme! allez, ô mes penseés!
Mon cœur est plein; je veux pleurer!"

Yes, forty years too late! I too am touched by the

* Ses pensées.

Digitized by Google

premature death of the beautiful child of nature and the island. She who loved "not wisely but too well;" and tears fill my eyes, even while I know that all the tender and most affecting part is but a poetic fiction; except her death. I will go to the Margellina, cross to Procida in a fisherman's boat, try and find some trace of poor Graziella's little cell. Mayhap speak to some withered old woman among the Lazaroni, once the blithe and beauteous companion of his heroine, once one of the young girls of the fishing beach, in the suburbs towards Pausilipo, the playmates in 1810, of poor *Graziella.* For there is no doubt it is true enough; while young and poor and obscure, this poet and wild visionary statesman actually led the life of one of themselves among their fishermen of the bay of Naples. Admirable school to enlarge and fortify the poetic soul of youth, and what a strange eventful life has his been; but even from his own story he was cold and selfish at eighteen; a poetic dandy at thirty; indeed, at forty, when Lady Hester Stanhope sets him down as an affected fop, among the cedars of Lebanon,—before, poor fellow! he lost his only child—but how read unmoved his unaffected sorrows in the Holy Land, where he lays in her grave this daughter—snatched from him in her 11th year! This touches the chord of my own tender regrets! O, this sinking of the heart, this bitterness of life—to lose all that makes life sweet! years pass on in this *triste* medley dream of life! If susceptibility heightens the keenness

Digitized by Google

of enjoyment, so too does it aggravate our inevitable miseries. Come, sweet oblivion — next hope, heaven's best balm.

One of the excursions here is up the nearer hills to the convent of the *Cimiè*. I put on my walking shoes early, before the sun grows too hot (for already now, the 8th of February, it is very hot from 11 till 3), crossing the old bridge, and along the road of the right bank of the Palione, about three miles up the stream, where the mountains close in a more narrow defile, I reach the Abbey of *St. Pons* — here too is a curious ruin of a chapel, on the top of a perpendicular rock over the road, just below the church of the monastery (now a seminary), which, for the most part, is a large modern building, church and all in one: the latter still left unfinished in its stucco, with scaffolding holes in the rough first coat of mortar, as so many of the continental churches are.

Returning along the brow of these hills (they swell higher to mountains, and the snowy Alps peep over all) on a still higher point, along lanes and small paths, among olive and orange orchards — vineyards, in stripes of wheat and beans; a mile nearer Nice, I come to the Convent of the *Cimiè;* the front portico of the chapel fresh in fresco paintings of monastic martyrs, the Virgin and our Saviour.

Through the iron gate, I see it encloses a cemetery,

Digitized by Google

and I hear the buzzing of children at school—all else solitary and secluded.

In the level space in front, I was struck by the size and beauty of the ever-green oaks, and a curious marble pillar with spiral trunk, surmounted by a cross of the middle ages: hereabout too, are the Roman remains of an amphitheatre and temple; which, after all, I did not see.

I say not enough or too much of Nice; one in vain describes the features of a town or the country. All this coast is much alike, sunny shores, rocky hills and mountains, here and there plains where their now dry torrent rivers *débouche*. Every where the olive, orange, and vine; stone walls, and high massive houses, even in the villages.

Narrow, dirty, ill-paved streets — but plenty of fountains, and water running along the gutters.

Then comes the details of particular cities from Montpellier to Leghorn, or down to Calabria; 'tis still the same, with certain small modifications — for you get among the Italians in such an easy transition that you are not much struck by any change. You may speak French and Italian well, and still be among an everlasting jargon; the same *patois* running all round. At Naples who can understand a word said, more than here, or at Montpellier! This Niçois language differs little or nothing from the same *patois* in the whole south of France; — to be sure it may get still a trifle more Italian.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IV.

TO GENOA BY THE CORNICE.— LOOK BACK AT NICE.— ITS CLIMATE, NEGLECT, AND BEGGARS.— ARRIVE AT GENOA.— THE KING.— CONSULS.— FÊTES.— OPERA.— REVIEW.— REGATTA.— START FOR LEGHORN BY STEAMER.— PISA BY RAIL.— ON TO CIVITA VECCHIA. — ITS PORT.— CAN'T LAND WITHOUT A CONSUL'S VISA. — APPEARANCE OF THE COAST.— TIPSY ENGINEER AND SICK CAPTAIN. — STORMY. — ISCHIA. — BAY OF NAPLES.—MOLE.— LANDING AT CUSTOM-HOUSE.—NAPLES.— VILLA REALE.— CHAIA.— POMPEII.— BAIÆ.— MUSIC.— CAMPO SANTO.— TOLEDO.— MOLE.— OPERA.— GOATS.— EUROPA CAFÉ.— FLOWERS.— MARKETS.

I AM off for Genoa, — the small steamer which goes there once a week charges thirty francs, while the diligence (there are two) asks only twenty.

These last three days, though the sun is as hot and as brilliant as it has remained this last month, have been freezing; though indeed one can see no ice — nothing but whirlwinds of dust; nor will the town water a single street or road — no, not for one hundred yards, until spring or summer, when most of us strangers have left.

But, apropos of this unwise neglect,— nothing is cared for — everything seems left to decay and look shabby,

Digitized by Google

as if the effort to build great rows of houses in the Croix de Marbre quarter towards the Var, and the suburb behind this chateau mount, were quite enough; indeed nothing seems done by the town. The terrace coping-wall is crumbling away and shabby; the plaister under foot, worn in holes, threatens the shops, restaurants, and cafés beneath on the Corso, to let in the rain, when it does come — only I believe they are too strong, all vaulted: even the little square of the botanic garden, full of dust, lies unfinished, with mere cane (*roseau*) broken rails round the borders; — all is left slovenly and unfinished, as if in fact there were no government at all! Happily they are a quiet, merry people, and want very little; but really the *Intendant* and Council stand for nothing.

They say the city is very poor, at the price everything is at; — almost, nay, quite equal to Paris! Yet, from a defective collection of that stupid contrivance of the *octroi*, the city funds are low. Why not tax the owners of these enormous houses and hotels, which have no mercy in fleecing us travellers and sojourners! Eight hundred or one thousand pounds, would alter the face of everything.

Another drawback here, and I think the greatest nuisance, are the regular beggars; they beset the streets, the shop-doors, the walks, the promenades, and whine and howl at every frequented place! They

Digitized by Google

even mount the stairs (the doors are always open till ten at night), and ring at the bells, and groan and whine at every door, up to the very top of the house. People are afraid of them from superstition, and give, and give, to continue the nuisance; but it is scandalous in the authorities' allowing it,— it might be put a stop to in a single day, and all these pests sent into one poorhouse. But I am persuaded if they got an inkling of such a kind provision, not one in twenty but would run off, to avoid any sort of work. These animals, like our own London regular street beggars, are not the deserving destitute, and should be above all strictly forbidden. After all, to a family, if for some years or for life, a villa in its orange and olive gardens or grounds in the environs, along towards the Var on the south hill-sides, or by the Palione towards the north, from one to three miles out of town, might be got comparatively cheap, either to rent or purchase, and be a desirable residence to those who like a constant hot sun, and have nothing left at home to care for. The theatre, easy access to society, balls, and the more economical mode of life, are certainly attractions beyond the reach of any of our own country towns; one must, however, take into account, travelling, passports, and that kind of nothingness one must submit to in a strange language and strange country: — to begin properly, one should master the *patois du pays.*

Digitized by Google

French and Italian is of little use beyond your drawing-room, and will leave you for ever that most dismal of all God's creatures — a stranger.

Although the sun gains ground daily, these cold north-easters are as obstinate as our spring east winds, and very much colder. Genoa, farther north, in the corner where the mountains turn south, met by the range of the Apennines, may be better, can't be worse, — so I take my place; but these diligences are sad creeping things, and begin by a creep up the mountain north of the city, of a couple of hours' duration: — besides they are wretchedly horsed! It is the same with the post-horses. I watched our Usher of the Black Rod (one of our worthy admirals), with his two carriages, starting for Genoa. The horses were so lean, so miserable, that it must have been sad work to sit behind them, to see them flogged by their brutes of postillions.

All this is the fault of Government. Sardinia is in a transition state — as yet certainly nothing for the better; and they are chattering of liberty! such liberty as will lead them to "*il mio prigione!*" For they neither understand the right sort, nor can they conquer it. Italian journals seem to me dull, drivelling nonsense. Ignorant worn out platitudes on every theme: or is it my own ignorance of the peculiar force of their language! To an Italian liberal they may seem as strongly perspicuous as a *Times* leader! I'll jog on.

Digitized by Google

Adieu, good, pleasant, cheerful, primitive Nice! I have never entered or walked about any large town so perfectly easy and *innocent!*

There is a cheerful light-heartedness among the young population, quite refreshing; — rarely any squabbling or crime — everybody seems content on very little, and living on an industrious, pains-taking economy.

I speak of the *people*; but indeed the richer and idle world, mostly made up of foreigners, are comparatively humble and rational. Driving about in their carriages seems their greatest effort and luxury,— but, I should add, smoking, morning, noon, and night.

To forward their own mercantile speculations,— which after all are a mere nothing compared to their profits in taking passengers,— to enhance any danger and difficulty there may be, and make the trip as dismal and disagreeable as they can, all the steamers along this coast start in the evening, and only run at night. It cannot be more than fifty or sixty miles from Nice to Genoa,— a morning's run in any tolerable boat. The Sardinian steamer, I see, is a small thing, and slow enough; only one other plies to and from Marseilles, and none of the other Mediterranean steamers even touch here.

There are two diligences in the morning, at seven and eight; they take twenty-eight hours. The road lies along the southern edges of the Alps, most part

Digitized by Google

of the way overhanging the sea; everywhere grand, sublime. I find two Sardinian officers in the *interior* of the coach, both very agreeable. At the first stage, *La Turbia,* a village just above Monaco, our luggage was taken down and searched! This is the second time in constitutional Sardinia! Of all the vexatious contrivances of various Europe, this is the worst; at least it disputes the palm with passports, as if to disgust one with travelling. They ask us if we have nothing "to *declare,*" going from one of their own towns to another. Nice ceases to be a free port; and yet their parliament are chattering about liberty and enlightened ideas!

O, give me the enlightened despotism of one sensible man! I think the French but too well off; for at least some things for the public good are promptly and frankly done,—without the delay, and being bandied from one set of selfish talkers to another.

We dine at *Mentone:* this mountain road has less climbing up and down than one might expect, but its length is doubled by its following the gorges at the edge of the cliffs; so that it is a constant in and out,—sometimes overhanging the sea, then again among olive orchards in the steep small glens or valleys. Monaco, on its little peninsular rock, jutting into the sea, we could see below us (like Villefranc at setting out) for a couple of hours; indeed, our progress, though often at

Digitized by Google

a good smart trot, seems a mere snail's-pace, the eye taking such a sweep over mountains and sea.

But I must not attempt description, it has been done so often; and this *cornice* road is pretty well known. We pass various towns:— *Vintimiglia* is large, and has its dry-bedded torrent, like Nice;— *St. Remo*, too.

At *St. Laurentia*, which is a large town, there is some trade in oil and wine; and at all of them by the sea-side I observed large boats, and vessels building on the beach, and a good many fishing-boats and small coasters hauled up out of the surf; which, as the day was windy from the west, rolled in, lashing the rocks and sands in a continued foam.

A mass of clouds passed over us from the north, and for an hour or two conquered the western wind. This storm, with its smart shower, laid the dust a little. The first rain I have seen for these six weeks, but the weather remains cold.

We were soon uncomfortably packed in the diligence: a stout old gentleman, "a ton of man," was the worst; a soldier of the line faced him, and a country dame, with something like a wallet, beside him. Everybody takes snuff, and the offering was incessant, besides the smoking as a matter of course. The soldier entered into the conversation with the officers very familiarly, and perhaps intelligently, but I cannot follow the Italian, much less the jargon of the country.

Digitized by Google

Everybody, it seems, is going to Genoa, to the fêtes (the railroad to be inaugurated by the King), and for the last days of the Carnival: — not a bed to be had at the hotels; apartments exorbitant, &c. In short I could not get to Genoa at a worse time, for I am tired of shows and sight-seeing.

Sunday, 19th February, at length dawns on us. We see Genoa for hours before we arrive, with the ranges of mountains to the eastward; indeed we could see its lighthouse long before daylight. It looks quite close, but the road lengthens as we advance.

After all, this short journey might be got over just as easily in half the time, either by land or sea. But in Italy everything is still behind-hand. Their steamers are slow and very expensive. The fare, for instance, from Nice, is thirty francs; ten more than by the diligence! There is no sort of reason why it should be more than five or six francs. In the same way they charge one hundred and thirty francs (*5l.* 10*s.*) from Genoa to Naples, a run of thirty hours; — though it occupies two days or more, as they call at Leghorn and Civita Vecchia, remaining for hours — for their own, rather than their passengers' convenience.

To Malta the fare is two hundred and twenty-five francs,— out of all proportion to the distance; so that, by coming round the shores as far as Genoa, you are not at all advanced on the score of economy; for the fare

Digitized by Google

is much the same to and from Marseilles, with all sorts of contrivances to increase every kind of expense — the consuls, the boatmen, the stewards, the porters. At the office they pretend to say you are *found;* it turned out only a very bad dinner each twenty-four hours;— the breakfast to be paid for, even more than at a hotel, and all the cabin servants quite as greedy and impudent — while they are scarcely civil, except at the moment they expect their present, which must be extravagant, if it prevents parting insolence, both of word and look. All this by the way; it accumulates as we get towards Naples, where it is intolerable; —but I anticipate.

All the young world read of Genoa "la Superba," lying at the foot of its amphitheatre of picturesque mountains. It is now nearly forty years since, full of youthful curiosity and admiration, I went the round of all the show palaces in the vias *Nuova*, *Nuovissima*, and *Balbi*. These three streets run into each other, and form the main artery through the town: they are far from wide enough to give the houses a fair chance of being seen to advantage; while those running across them — indeed all the rest — are hardly wide enough for a cart; in which, when you look upwards, you see a narrow strip of sky between the cornices and roofs of houses, everywhere five and six stories high. This continental build keeps out the too fiery sun in summer, true; but it has a gloomy damp effect.

Digitized by Google

These forty years must have produced great changes, yet, to my eye, there seems none. No doubt there are, too, more houses on the hill-sides round, and they have built a fine terrace on the harbour side along the quays, the "*Terraçone;*" but the mole appears more dirty and dilapidated than ever. Some reparations are going on here and there, very slowly, in violent contrast to the activity in erecting a wooden temple, statues, seats, and decorations on the wharf at the end of the Terraçone, for the King's reception, and the railroad ceremony.

Indeed, nowhere do I see the least neatness or repair of anything. The marble door-ways, cornices, windows, everything not in constant use and wear, are hung with cobwebs, and covered with dirt. Even the great thoroughfare and great palaces are hardly an exception. Other abominations are very much as in French cities and suburbs. There is a villanous compound of most disagreeable smells.

All the world are crowding the one long line of the three streets, from the theatre to the railway terminus, — the whole length perhaps rather more than a mile.

The present King of Sardinia looks forty, is stout and fair, wears large moustaches, is said to be popular, and is a good deal a *sans ceremonie* kind of man. He has a young family.

Genoa has taken a week's holiday—everybody dressed out, and the hotels and everything to be hired making

Digitized by Google

a rich harvest. I went to the supposed best hotel, close to the exchange, and near the harbour and quays — the *Feder;* but impossible to get a bed-room. I got one, however, in the Vico St. Agnese,— the very essence of every species of discomfort, besides dirt and damp. Hotels and lodgings are sure to take away one's last lingering spice of romance attached to renowned names, places, and antiquity on the Continent! Traveller follows traveller; nobody dares to remonstrate;—indeed, now, it would be useless. All our young fellows who escape for a spring or winter seem in love with being fleeced; indeed they are the exact cause of the exaction everywhere. It is voted ungenteel to think of economy; so their sisters and mammas, and their governor (if they are lumbered with any), are obliged to travel *en Prince.*

It is of little use talking of forty years since (as bad as sixty), but it is a fact that we were infinitely better treated then than we are now, — better meals and less greediness of servants; indeed, all sorts of inevitable imposition much more modest. The dinners particularly. They are now invariably mean and bad, the soup and wine mere water, and no such thing to be seen as any *delicacy of the season!*

To get at the hundreds of good things going, one must make some stay, take a lodging and have your own servants; indeed, go to market yourself. The recent complaints about our hotels, and all the *pro* and

Digitized by Google

con letters to the *Times* on extravagant charges, are not dreamt of here on the Continent, where hotel-keepers reign supreme lords of their own castles, doing you a favour by robbing you at their good pleasure. At home, if we are fleeced, at least we have great civility, and generally great comfort and good cheer, for our money.

Nothing need be more dull than the description of fêtes, except, perhaps, *assisting* at them; but, as I saw nothing, these four or five days are soon dismissed. The King and Court were expected at twelve, and arrived from Turin by an express train at half-past one. A single line of rail was laid down for the occasion to the temple and altar at the Terraçone, where all the high world, who could get seats, sat waiting, and all the low world crowded and jammed themselves in, in all directions. I went up to the walled terrace of a church in the western suburb, a mile off, from whence there was a good view of things at a distance below, on the harbour side; where three Dutch men-of-war joined a Sardinian war-steamer in saluting. So there was plenty of noise, and smoke; and bell-ringing at all the churches. At night there was a general illumination;—the escaping gas in the streets very offensive — the dust smothering, from the shuffling along of thousands; and the carriages — there being no room for their circulation was of no moment.

Digitized by Google

There was that stupid Verdi opera of the *Trovatore* (Foundling) and a *veglione* at midnight.

Next day, at ten, a review of the whole garrison on the glacis, out at the *Porta del Sol*, I think, to the east; under the bastion, where the mountain-torrent pours its stream (when there is any), now nearly dry. The troops, drawn up in three lines, waited an hour for his Majesty, who at length rode on the parade at the head of his brilliant *cortège*, &c. It had the merit of being soon over; when the king sent his soldiers to breakfast, and, at a smart trot, crossed the *Ponte Pia* bridge, followed by all his courtiers, somewhere into the country.

This eastern suburb is pretty, and, besides its kitchen gardens, is the richest of the city. Here the town is least hemmed in by the mountains, which rise pretty steep elsewhere; followed upwards, *up stairs*, by many of the streets north of the great thoroughfare.

The richest nôble here, the Marquis di Serra, gives a grand ball, said to cost him one hundred thousand francs. His palace, the most exquisite in taste and modern art, will hold, he says, eight hundred, comfortably; but, to oblige, he issues tickets for twelve hundred! —not that I could by any means get one of these cramming additions, as our consul told me "the thing was impossible," as persons of rank, his *own* immediate relations, could not, with all *his* influence! Of this I could not judge; but I could, certainly, of a very rude

Digitized by Google

reception by this old gentleman; who is no doubt most accustomed to receive captains of merchantmen—and their fees.

Apropos of our consuls (where they are English), and our envoys and ambassadors; they everywhere seem to think that they need scarcely be civil to Englishmen not having letters of introduction from some private friend!—so far do they stand aloof from helping a countryman by their good offices; as for any hospitality, that seems out of the question! Their high appointments are considered quite a close, private affair, made for their own exclusive and particular convenience. Perhaps they may plead the rush abroad of Tom, Dick, and Harry, and of unmistakable Cockneys; but, in a broad sense, the excuse is very lame, and the affectation of fashion, and of clique, contemptible;—it is worse — it is mischievous. One of these persons I applied to here made a great difficulty about a presentation to the king, when in fact there was none whatever. There was a ball on the third night, at the royal palace in the Strada Balbi: all officers in uniform were received as a matter of course, and foreign officers presented as a matter of course by their respective envoys.

The leading streets were illuminated every night, very cleverly, by stars at certain distances, and, at the *Carlo Felice* (the opera), a *veglione* after the opera; but masking seems growing out of date, and *vegliones* get

Digitized by Google

proportionably dull affairs, in which a great crowd amuse themselves, jostling and staring at each other in silence, in a dusty, gaseous, atmosphere.

The fêtes wound up with a regatta. A poor affair; half a dozen clumsy harbour-boats starting from outside the mole and rowing in to the goal (a hulk fitted up). The King appeared for a few minutes in his barge: the ships, all dressed in flags, manned yards, and saluted twice. I went on board the only Genoa war-steamer, bought of one of our steam companies, more for show than use, as her heavy Paixhan guns would soon shake her to pieces. I wished myself away from the deafening noise, but the Piedmontese ladies stood all this thundering wonderfully well. The percussion of the guns of the heavy Dutch frigate close to us, which we felt very forcibly, drove very few of the women off the paddle-boxes. None of the guns were wadded, the ships lying so close to each other: formerly many accidents happened from the hard wadding striking within a certain range.

The mole is full of small traders, and a good deal of activity going on at the wharves,—unloading grain of all sorts, and hides. I see very few English vessels; indeed, the great mass are Sardinian coasters.

Genoa may have improved in her shops, but they are very poor affairs still; small, no show or taste displayed, open in front in the simple way of the East,—except a

Digitized by Google

very few in the chief streets, and they are chiefly French.

The visas one may get at home from ambassadors do not at all shelter one from the rapacity of the various consuls: a little rude animal of the Two Sicilies is here, to make you pay six francs for his visa. Rome has one, too, or you cannot land at Civita Vecchia; and Florence another. The steam-boat offices play into the hands of these harpies, and will not book you or take you without their good leave, and there is no help for it.

In all their harbours the boatmen are let loose on passengers, to impose on them as much as possible: there is no exact fare, so you must bargain and bate them down before you get into a boat,—the steamers, as if on purpose, never lying alongside the wharf, as they might so easily do. However, the boatmen are generally civil fellows, and content with getting ten times as much as if left to their own countrymen's patronage.

Having run the gauntlet of consuls, I embark for Naples, in a rather good Neapolitan steamer, the *Calabrese.* They take your passport at the office, and give you merely a receipt for it and your one hundred and thirty francs, which is in turn taken from you by the first cabin servant you meet on deck; so that at last you have nothing whatever left to attest for one or the other, and are in fact at the mercy of the cabin boy!—not that

Digitized by Google

he could have any interest in playing tricks; but they certainly take care that the security shall be all on one side.

We were said to start at six; but as the run to Leghorn, where they remain a day, is very short, we did not weigh the anchor till ten at night. I say nothing of Genoa, its general features are so well known, and Murray's Hand-book is in everybody's hands. Those three streets and its churches are magnificent. The theatre is large and handsome, and the one café opposite to it constantly crammed by officers and the *élite* of the town, all smoking — they even smoke at table, before the ladies at the hotels retire; nobody minds it.

All Europe dress alike now-a-days; there is very little distinction left — nothing odd, or picturesque, or amusing, which is the worst part of it.

Here the trading class still retain their women's white muslin scarf over the head, and crossed over the breast, as in Spain; but even that is giving way to the more *distingué* bonnet — the Paris *chapeau*. This scarf for country women and lower classes is of cotton, in egregiously flaring colours.

The women struck me as well-grown and comely, often handsome, with blue eyes and light hair; so have many of the men.

The better classes tall and handsome; they all wear beards and moustache, more or less, so that we English

Digitized by Google

look like clipped fighting-cocks among them; and I must say (so prone is one to like whatever is the fashion of a country) by no means to advantage; but if there are occasionally a few hundred English in any one Italian city, they are quite lost in the crowd.

It so happened, that at the *Feder* most of the English were small, and by no means prepossessing in appearance — perhaps invalids, while the Italians were tall, handsome fellows. Why should we wonder at our travelling girls occasionally falling in love with them, when so often thrown together, besides the temptation of becoming *contessas* and *marquisas!*

I must not forget the railway to Turin, and another to Novara; so that of the Italian states Piedmont takes the lead. They reach Turin in four or five hours; the first class fare twelve francs — very moderate for the distance.

A small steamer, I find, runs to *Spezzia* (in the neighbouring gulf), from whence coaches ply to Tuscany, &c.; but the worst of many shiftings in travelling is not only the harbour boats, porters, hotels, &c., but fresh openings of trunks at the custom-houses, and other vexations, "too tedious to mention."

To make sure of my passage, I go on board six hours too soon. The weather is very fine; a bright sun every day, but the wind very cold still; however, considering this winter, we have no right to find fault.

Digitized by Google

We dine at eight o'clock, to give those passengers time enough (coming from Marseilles) who are on shore for the day, and in the hope of tiring out the patience of the new comers, and save so much. Indeed, the meanness and greediness of these boats is quite inconceivable; agreeably relieved by pertness on the least hitch or remonstrance.

We now find their meals "included" to mean a very shabby dinner only. You may order your breakfast, and of course pay for it extra. The impudence of this cheat is set off by a wonderful *sang froid;* there is nobody to appeal to. The captain is in his cabin, with a sore head or leg; the second captain and pilot are mere sailors among the men. The engineer is a drunken Englishman, swiping at his boiler; and our steward and his myrmidons reign paramount, shuffling every thing off with a "*ma*," and a shrug on the "*company.*" Luckily, this unhandsome fix does not last long; and, as far as the conduct of the boat goes, nothing could be better. We glided out and in the harbours so quietly and well, that it was hard to tell how the orders were given or executed.

Among the crowd of ships in the harbour at Leghorn, there are more English than at Genoa. This Tuscan has always been a stirring port. They have now a railway to Pisa, straight as an arrow, and on to Florence.

Digitized by Google

We all land, rattle through the Strada Grande, a mile outside the town and bastions, to the station, and go off by rail to see the lions at Pisa. How many visions flit before me, as in some half-remembered dream! Here I knew Madame de Stäel, — here danced at the gay balls at the Mastiani's, — here laughed at the odd pranks of Professor Pachianni — all gone — to thin air — asleep in the *campo santo.*

I take a good look at those magnificent doors of the cathedral, of the Bolognese John; and once more wonder at the strange freak of that tower, whether by design or accident — what matter! The miniature *ex voto* chapel, on the quay, methinks looks very much more dingy and dirty than of old, and less beautiful, yet are forty years as nothing here on the Arno, and this is the same old Pisa.

At Leghorn they have made a new suburb square, gateway, and drive, south of the town; but here I see nothing changed, unless a trifle more decayed. The plain and distant Appenines, with their snowy summits, are very fine.

At Pisa, I look, as I stroll along, at the outside of these water-side palaces, whose interior I shall never see again. The Felichis, and their astonishing fish-dinners (*carême*), the easy *conversaziones* everywhere! In short, I dwell on the past charm of youth, which relished

Digitized by Google

everything; and now, after a long, common-place, unsatisfactory life, and too near the dregs,

> "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
> Seem to me the uses of this world!"

But if I suffer this sad feeling to get the better of me, the first steamer direct home, to my own fire-side and comforts, would be the wisest move; no, I will take a last look, and mark where I can the changes taking place.

I am foolishly surprised at the nearness of the hills which come down to the sea, south of Leghorn; they relieve the flatness all about very agreeably, and are even within an easy walk, which I had forgotten.

I thought Elba could be seen to the south, perhaps Gorgona, but there is nothing outside visible beyond the beacon rock, *Meloria*, in the offing here.

Here Byron and Shelley are sure to be thought of, particularly the last:—men have no business sailing about in yachts and boats unless really good active seamen; true, his was an accident, but the result of not knowing what to do. The sea is everywhere proverbially treacherous, requiring a never-ceasing vigilance and thorough knowledge.

After all, who ever knows what is for the best — to quit this world a little sooner or later? We must confide in God's infinite goodness. "Whatever is is

Digitized by Google

right!" for is it not guided and meant by the Almighty!

Everybody scrambles on board by five o'clock, and we are off very punctually. There is a very nice roundhouse (though it is square) or deck-cabin in this *Calabrese*, particularly grateful to lady passengers—not that it is quite free from the constant cigar.

It grew squally as the night wore on, with rain; by Monday morning the wind increased as we approached Naples; luckily it was off the land, which partially sheltered us; from the south-west it would have been very awkward, with the captain laid up in his cabin, and a tipsy engineer, who swore he would not obey orders, but keep full steam on when told to take it off! However, there is a pilot, and by four o'clock we run inside of Ischia, and into smoother water, anchoring in the Mole by six o'clock.

The boatmen and various commissioners of the hotels now come into play; you name some hotel, and are bag and baggage seized on, and rowed to the custom-house and police-office, where your passport arrives before you, and for which you get a kind of printed note, telling you you must soon appear and get another, and pay six carlins for it as a permit to reside, if only for a day or two.

A musical gentleman with his fiddle, I was told, had to pay two piastres, about ten shillings, duty for it. They smuggle any small thing; but you must pay the

Digitized by Google

smugglers almost as much as the duty, perhaps more!

The fellow who searched my trunk (a head-man behind him looking on) held out his hand very frankly for his fee; and I put a franc in it quite openly after the trunk was relocked, as I could not get it out at the instant. This did not prevent my honest commissionaire, who made me out a bill of two piastres, from charging a three carlini fee (he *never paid*), three carlini the boat (he paid one perhaps), and again three carlini for the cab — the small four-wheeled, open things of two seats, they scamper about n now — much less picturesque than the old fine-painted and gilded *caricoli*, of half a century ago, but quite as numerous; there seems no set fare for these hacks, they take anything; by the hour or the course, from one carlin to a piastre. The exchange is everywhere so much against France and England, that it is hard to tell what a carlin is worth!—it should be fourpence or fourpence half-penny, but it is now nearer sixpence.

I was obliged to pay nearly five francs for the ducat, drawing on a Paris banker, losing near thirty francs on three hundred (below par); they will take napoleons at forty-four carlini, and five franc pieces at eleven carlini; the *piastre*, of nearly the same size (the dollar), is twelve carlini; it is the old Spanish and Neapolitan colonnado. I went to the *Hôtel des Etrangers*, round beyond the largo St. Lucia and *chiatamone* or hill towards the *Chiaia;* where they all speak English after a fashion,

Digitized by Google

and all the inmates were, I found, either English or American.

Here their charges are quite first-rate, at any rate; bedroom six carlini, dinner nine carlini, very mean and bad, and the wine to match, and breakfast five carlini; now, for this cheap country, this exceeds our worst London hotels, considering your fare and your comfort.

It is very cold, and there is no fire, and not a room even enjoying the short warmth of the sun; so on the third day I took a single room, at five carlini, in the Palazzo Sedriana, on the Chiaia, close to the Royal Garden gate, facing full south; but here, though thought the best situation in Naples, facing the garden and bay, Sorrento, and Capri, the point and houses about the Castel del Ovo (the chiatamone) block out Vesuvius, the rising sun, and the fine sweep of the bay towards Portici. Indeed, the only good look now from the town water-side is on the largo St. Lucia; farther on, at the Royal Palace, the Castle Square, and the Mole, the forts and more recent walls shut out the view, except from the more distant suburbs east and west. People now take lodgings, and there are hotels as far as the Mergellina westward.

Although it is now the fifth of March, the weather is very cold. Everybody says Naples is wonderfully improved; not that it strikes me so, yet no doubt I

Digitized by Google

forget: the strada *Toledo* and *Chiaia* have been fresh paved, some few houses built, others freshened up; but altogether it is still the same — and, indeed, so I would have it. All that is really fine and good is as old as the hills.

Everything here is centred in the king, the police, and the army. His Majesty is said to be an amiable man, good husband, good father, good master, good Christian! — all this in the interior of his palace. There are sentinels everywhere.

Like Genoa, Naples shines as little as of old in shops or cafés. There is only one of each of any show, or at all fashionable — the *Europa*, and *Savarese's* (their Howell and James)—both close to the Palace Square, at the end of the Toledo. But one must walk about, and observe narrowly, to be aware of the riches and the fine things in a city like this, setting aside its museum, its antiquities and its churches, all containing infinite treasures. No street but rejoices in some grand fountain, colossal marble figures, portals, columns, monuments, which in London would be a wonder: indeed, it is not till one gets back home among our poor, little, mean, brick tenements, that the grandeur of the designs, and the size and fine taste of the palaces here, and better houses in almost every street, are recollected with interest, — by the violent contrast.

As to the people, I miss (or am I quite mistaken?) the

Digitized by Google

crowds of street traders, except a few on the St. Lucia, with their oysters and shells; and along the Mergellina one sees comparatively few even of their sunny water-side people, with their red and brown woollen caps; not lazzaroni; who are quite dispersed.

There is little of any peculiar dress left—that of the poorer classes is as heterogeneous as our own—whatever they can get to cover themselves with—hats, caps, jackets, shirt-sleeves, old coats, shod or bare-foot, stockings or not, as it happens.

I see less too of the peculiar gobbling of boiled maccaroni, and the Toledo is quite cleared of the thousand eating huckster's stands and stalls, and the crowds of former days. On the Mole too I miss the funny improvisatori, mountebanks and charlatans, queer poets ambulant, and singing groups; indeed, I hear no music at all, except a few organs and one bagpipe. In short, there seems to be nothing merry left that meets the eye in the streets; however, the whole world are intent on making money—honestly or not, from a *grano* up to a hotel bill. You cannot buy the least thing that you are not cheated in in the most absurd way. They have no idea of any shame attached to asking ten times what they might take, if beaten down. So everything must be a matter of bargain, and they seem to thank you quite as much for the smaller as the larger sum.

From giving four carlini for a ride, I found I could go

Digitized by Google

even farther for one, and from five and six by the hour, I at last paid only two. In the shops, in the same way, you can trust to nothing they say, even when "*prezzi fissi*" is stuck up at the door.

As to their going ahead of late years —they too have their railways—to Pompeii, Casserta and Capua. The station, a good way off in the east suburb, going along the main strand and road by the Piliero and custom-house.

I find the great cooking and maccaroni-eating place now-a-days is below the Largo di Castello, and it goes on among the multitude along the sea face of the city, beyond the *Piliero,* on the way to Portici: poor things! frugal is their fare, their lives one long abstinence, yet are they merry — perhaps happy.

I have just been to the museum, which contains endless treasures in sculpture, on the ground floor; on the first floor is the library, a suite of rooms with pictures, and the antique bronzes from Pompeii, Herculaneum, &c.

This *Museo Borbonico* is open every day from nine to three—so it is after a fashion—that is, each suite is kept locked up by an officious custodium, who unlocks for you or the party, and of course, sticking to you, expects a fee; a late improvement.

I went partly round with a party of Italians: all that is to be seen here would occupy a month of untiring industry and the most undivided attention; but

Digitized by Google

with one of these civil robbers at one's heels it soon becomes rather a bore.

There is nothing very new except in the recent better arrangement, and the fine mosaic discovered of late at Pompeii. It is a battle on horseback and in chariots, said to be of Alexander defeating Darius. A warrior is down, pierced by the spear of a hostile horseman. The chief group are flying, while all the prominent actors seem extremely interested at the fate of the fallen chief Darius. Even the horses, which are extremely spirited, look concerned, turning their heads towards him, in the most difficult positions: how superior were the ancients to everything one sees now-a-days, even in their drawing and expression!—as to their statues how inimitable! what a subdued expression of grief in that sitting empress Agrippina! what beauty in that exquisite figure of Bacchus! what love and enjoyment in that group of youth, their arms entwined! what majesty in their Joves! what strength in their Hercules, and all this so infinitely varied! These marbles speak — not so modern imitations.

What things are our latest equestrian and other statues, bronze or marble, stuck up in London, compared with these! — and yet our botchers are paid immense prices, and our fine arts' commission pay them! But even here, with these treasures before their eyes, there is a false, bad taste. I observed two painters

Digitized by Google

copying a very defective head of a virgin — half the face in deep shade cut it in two; another modelling a head of Galba or Tiberius, or some excessively repulsive Cæsar: why choose that! Farther on a young lady was modelling a Venus from a charming statuette. She had reduced it, and was evidently very clever; her father and mother stood by her; she was tall and handsome.

This is all very well, but I would not have young ladies make such a display of their art. Besides, handling and smearing with this bluish grey clay is by no means elegant, nice, or inviting; the rosy fingers are disgraced, one cannot forget it even after the washing.

I honestly set down the most trifling expenses as a guide to others, not ashamed of economy. All the cab fellows are content with a carlin from one end of the town to the other. I took one to the police, to get my passport; it is on the Largo di Castello, in the range of buildings devoted to the ministry (the secretaries of state); here, delivering my first bit of printed paper, they gave me my passport, very much stained and dirtied, demanding two carlini and one grano, and that I was to go (in good Italian I wouldn't understand) to our embassy, get it visé, and return for a permit to dwell in the city, &c.

À propos, I had heard of the adroitness of the pickpockets, and repented not taking a cab to the museum,

Digitized by Google

one day; for while I was losing my way, misdirected by a priest and two cockedhatted abbots, some of the laity picked my pocket of a favourite 'kerchief, which I had just most agreeably scented, pluming myself on it, alas!—but, setting aside my handerchief's ideal value, what can be more awkward than being without one, and far from home! Vexed at this, which I found out when at last I got to the museum, I determined to be excessively resolute, and gave them not a single grano. The day is lovely, and I begin to think the streets are crowded, as in the olden time. Though in fact Naples, from various causes, is not near so populous; she *had* five or six hundred thousand, now, they say, only three hundred and seventy thousand souls.

Sight seeing — even such beauteous things as these— is to me very tiring; so I ran through, as fast as these animals, who have charge of them, would let me. The day is too fine to be caged in any walls; so, being set down for my carlin at the gardens, I walked on to the Mergellina, which begins where the roads separate; the right hand, leaving the Chiaia behind, goes through the tunnel (*Groto di Pausilippo*). I kept on by the water's side, and passing the fishermen's boats, drawn up on the beach, stopped a moment to look at a party of young girls under the bow of one of them, thinking of Lamartine's "Graziella!" Other groups of twos and threes, mothers

Digitized by Google

and daughters, caught my eye: but I cannot say in the whole, or anywhere, I saw a single creature it would be possible to fall in love with—dingy, if not dirty—features and forms very so so.

The only rather pretty one (had she been well washed and not in rags) was busy, at a very popular employment here, looking after and destroying certain insects in her little brother's head! Now, M. de Lamartine says nothing of these little episodes in Mergellina life! But poets are bound by their muse never to tell the truth — not even in the dullest prose. So now I am cured, and care not to go hunting after poor dear Graziella's shade at Procida.

I rather inquired after a good harumscarum young fellow, with an enormous beard, who generously gave me a tiny bit of gold quartz he had brought all the way from our Australian diggings — anything from the antipodes becomes valuable, if only for bringing it so far. He was on board the *Calabrese*, and talked of joining a brother here, but for a few days, and off again to the other side of the world, to scramble in that golden lottery. I could not find him, and I was sorry, for I felt grateful; I love that impulse of good fellowship, uncalculating, ungenteel, unfashionable — at least true and disinterested — only a hearty shake of the hand! I, who could claim nothing, feel myself his debtor, and long to repay it in some way.

Digitized by Google

Still rambling about, half-way up the Toledo, I find a market; the meat does not look inviting; butchers and their stalls dirty; plenty of poultry, but either alive in baskets, or plucked in a very coarse way; the eggs look well, a grano each, rather more. Among vegetables, cauliflowers are fine and plentiful, and I see green peas — but neither are to be seen at hotel tables; the latter, fine and plentiful as they are, rarely. The potatoes are better than they look; young onions, leeks, and radishes; the turnips and carrots, like those of France, are not so sweet as ours, and grow longer, as if inclined to turn into radishes.

The fresh butter is very good, but dear, nine grani for about two and a half ounces. At their grocers and oilmen, such as they are, things are dearer than in London. So at their pork-butchers, sausages, tongues, &c. are at an extravagant rate —extravagant for Italy!

The pastrycooking is even more mere paste and sugar than in France; one hardly sees the least thing with fruit. They seem to have no such thing as jams and jellies, none in their pastry. There are no sauces in bottle, no herbs or savoury things preserved whatever, nor capsicums, nor Cayenne pepper; no fruits preserved in any way (no spices); in short, cooking resolves itself into the most insipid boilings or fryings of meat or fish, and maccaroni — even among the upper world.

There are no less than ten theatres open every

Digitized by Google

night: — the San Carlo and Del Fondo, royal; Ferdinando, Parthenope, Mezzo Cannone, Amphitheatre, Fiorentino, Nuovo, San Curlino, Fenice, and Sabeto; besides dioramas, shows, cabinets of curiosities, antiques, &c. The concerts occur seldom, and the programme of some piano player occasionally, not very inviting.

I find a kind of market-street for ready-cooked eatables to the left of the Mole, behind the Piliero; this is always crowded — one sees fried fish, Indian-corn bread, and mush (polenta), fried in slices, boiled potatoes, but less maccaroni than one would expect. All sorts of vegetables; apples and pears, and dried figs and raisins, and a kind of yellow bean; but there are many other eatables I can't make out; I see fennel is in as much favour as ever, though banished from the hotel tables; they carry it about in baskets and by donkey-loads, as they do cauliflowers.

Besides the excellent old mole harbour for smaller coasters, steamers, and merchantmen, there is an outer port, constructed of late years, immediately below the Royal Palace, and below the castle and arsenal, by running out a solid pier, defended by a breakwater to the west: here all their men-of-war lie.

At present in port, there are three barque sloops-of-war, and three steamers; next the pier, five other steamers, an old two-decker, a schooner, and three or four old hulks: all these seem in ordinary, except

Digitized by Google

perhaps half the steamers, which look ready for sea. The castle contains the arsenal or dockyard, spars, cannon, shot, &c., piled close below the palace; and in the fosse convicts are employed (as at other public works) in a rope-walk, in full activity, but not worked by steam, and but few ropemakers. Near them blacksmiths are breaking up old steam-boilers: a steam-engine, I see, is employed, by the dense smoke of its chimney, very near his majesty!

One now and then meets a naval officer or two, their undress not unlike ours; the gold lace on their cuffs and caps in rings, like the French, each additional ring denoting a step in rank. In their dress and manner all Europe have more or less copied our navy, and our way of doing duty. I observed at Genoa the midshipmen of the Dutch frigate seated in the stern sheets of their boats very strictly; and very good looking lads they were; hardly to be told from English middies. I think ours would look better with an embroidered anchor on the collar, like them, instead of our unmeaning white patch; and better still, the graceful aiguilette of the French midshipmen, in gold for the mates, and gold and blue alternate (*bigarré*) for the mids.

How much there is to alter all we see and feel, in association and comparison! which of us but must have been sadly disappointed with the very things that once were thought beautiful or delightful? And so we advance through life.

Digitized by Google

Witlings, new in the world, are very fond of sneering at querulous old age! as if nothing could once have been really better, and that we really do find comparisons more and more odious: to be sure certain excellences should never be compared. Things may have a relative goodness or beauty not at all inherent in themselves. But a truce to common-place here is this Royal Garden of the Chiaia (the *Villa Reale*), which I once thought quite an Arcadia, and I now find it a long promenade, not half so picturesque or beautiful as any of our squares — say Cadogan, at Chelsea. Its trees are poor things, and its shrubberies are tangled and neglected, with a good undergrowth of nettles. It is just fifty yards wide, and half a mile long, and is the fashionable promenade about four o'clock. While, on the pavement next the range of houses, all the carriages of the gentry are rattling up and down; those of the walkers drawn up on the Victoria Square, at the entrance gate, where a board shed, built up, conceals some statue in progress, I conclude. Next the sea a wall runs its whole length; at the further end it merges in an open avenue much neglected; of trees, planted of late, for a couple of hundred yards, where it reaches the open strand, and fishermen's boats and nets, of the Mergellina.

To be sure this is winter still, and a very cold one — the sun grows hot enough, but no leaves; hardly a

Digitized by Google

bud appears as yet, and the few geraniums and other flowers here and there seem barely alive. A few copies in marble of the most celebrated of the antique grace the walk; and the lion fountain in the centre, but it wants more water even for the ducks which paddle in its basin. Clouds of dust sweep through the air here, and along all the streets and roads; watering them is out of the question — here and there small patches are wet, as if with a watering-pot, about the Royal Palace.

Beggars swarm in all directions, particularly about the haunts of the English. All the best shop-doors are beset by them; it is a perfect infliction on us: the Italians suffer it from a strong spice of superstition, not at all from any charitable feeling. It is quite impossible to exaggerate this everlasting nuisance in all the towns round the coast, growing more intense the farther we come round Italy.

Sulphur and soap are the two great staples here; nothing can be less asked for in *detail;* but the coral shops have a certain vogue, and our travellers are induced to pay high prices for this very questionable ornament, which can be worked into nothing but tiny bits of things — shirt buttons, brooches, hardly bracelets: and even the fashion of it is poor. I find the deep red coral, which certainly *looks* the best, is not considered the thing,— it must be pale, as if faded in

Digitized by Google

the sun or not originally healthy; for this the prices are extravagant, for the least thing. The Neapolitans, like all the Italians, are ages behind in their jewellery: they import from France.

They copy us in their carriages, and many have very handsome turn-outs, as neat and knowing as at home. One of the king's brothers drives a good four-in-hand up and down the Chiaia, and contrives to take off his hat besides, pretty often,— a feat our jehus are not obliged to practice.

Those who come to Naples are expected to devour certain lions,— Vesuvius, Pompeii, Baia, —besides the hundred things in the town itself. It is seriously an infliction, in which you are pursued—worn out,—by the sturdy modern embodiment of the poet's fiction, sturdy, ragged, real Harpies!

It was not quite new to me, but I unluckily took a seat in one of their skimming dish carriages to Baia — cramped in position, and half choked by dust — the road all along two inches thick in fine white powder; even going through Pausilippo is by no means the worst of it.

The arch is much higher at the east than the west end; nor has it that very close, dismal, damp feel of our railway tunnels. This cuts off one of the bay capes, and a long ugly flat has to be got over, planted in trees without branches, to which the vines are trained, in

Digitized by Google

parts sown with crops of grain or vegetables — beans (the broad windsor kind) are seen everywhere (all round France and Italy), not yet in flower; and some patches of peas, looking already as if mostly gathered long since. As we round the inlets of the bay, we come to the Monte Nuovo and alight, to walk half a mile to the Lake Avernus, beyond it, and visit the Sybil's Cave.

I wish we had let it alone: we were beset by all sorts of greedy *genii loci;* some bearing whitewashed torches, to light, for which they only asked a piastre (*5s.*); others pestered us with pretended antiques — figures, coins, marbles —most, if not all, recent manufacture. It was in vain saying *no* or "niente;" they stuck to us, in company with sheer importunate beggars—men, women, and children — to the end of the day's chapter.

Everything is now fenced in — and doors locked! the fellow who had the key of the cave insisted on two carlins. A courier of my friend's managed them somehow, after a war of words for each thing. Then came fellows to carry us curious simpletons in to the Sybil's bath and boudoir — a hole deeper still, to the right, after we had advanced some hundred yards in darkness visible and torch-smoke. One of the party was thus carried through this puddle pickaback; the ladies, not quite so curious, declined, as did I, and we waited for the return of the more adventurous gent. To get away was a great relief. On the bank about the

Digitized by Google

cave we picked violets. The water of the lake is clear as crystal. We had a hot walk there and back, and met other carriages coming, and more sybil hunters; indeed there is a constant string coming and going most fine days.

Driving round (passing through Puzzuoli, and catching a glimpse of the pier of Augustus, whose buttresses are still above the sea below the town, forming a shelter for the boats), we come to the port of Baia, where are all three of the most interesting temples—first, of Diana, next Mercury, and farther on a few steps, next the wharf, to the left of the road, that of Venus, which is the most perfect, though it has no longer, like the other two, even a part of its domed roof left; that of Diana has only half left, as if cut down the middle; the Mercury has an "envious rent" in the arch — (they are all circular, and supposed baths): the echo of this last is very perfect within; it appears to be filled up to its first arched niches or windows, yet is still of noble proportions. In driving along the road, particularly after leaving Puzzuoli, one everywhere sees the remains of walls, arches, &c., in solid reticulated brickwork, on both hands, on the hills, in the vineyards, and at the water's edge — all of undoubted antiquity and as interesting as anything shown, to which names and stories are attached, often on contradictory authority, or the whim or hypothetical guesses of antiquaries.

Digitized by Google

Close to the Mercury temple they show the bath or boudoir of Venus, a lofty square room, with beautiful bas-reliefs in compartments round below the ceiling, now blackened and disfigured by the torches held up to them; and after all, one sees little or nothing, as the place is quite dark and we hurry round.

We then crossed the road to the Temple of Venus, opposite, and almost on the wharf of the port the coasters and boats close by. Except the roof, this is the most perfect. Why not repair and preserve all these beautiful remains? Nothing whatever is done; and something is worn, broken, or degraded every day. In future years they must disappear entirely. In all these remains, attesting the power, the knowledge, and the fine taste of antiquity, one is particularly struck by the beauty and solidity of their brickwork! and the more than stone-like hardness of their stucco, which still leaves their interior bas-reliefs as perfect as ever, where not wantonly broken: it seems, too, in their walls to outlast the layers of brick. These bricks, by the way, are very large, square, and flat — about a foot square, and inch and half thick — a kind of tile; but they are very various in shape, some forming the vertical diamond pattern, others seem copied in our modern tiles. Indeed, one meets with nothing, great or small, public or private, that is not the most fit and most admirable; for even the smallness of their houses was

Digitized by Google

doubtless from the best reasons. At the present day, what better are the little rooms of modern Europe in the largest street buildings! meant to contain thousands of the poorer people, five and six stories from the earth?

Surrounded by a begging rabble, young and old, in the temples, we set some little girls to dancing; the tarantula they called it; but it was a very tame, lame affair. One of them beat a tambourine, and we all laughed in concert; it was a relief from the constant whining accompaniment of our trip, wherever we stopped for an instant; so we gave them a larger sum (five grani) for being merry, but they would insist on saying they were all "dying of hunger"—"mora di fame."

Very often miserable objects do really present themselves, and cling to the carriage-doors, or fasten on your sleeve, making the most stunning and hideous noises. The whole district sends its destitute to the road-side, where they know we *forestieri* are constantly to be found. The very hucksters and small tradespeople in the towns can hardly refrain from openly begging, and certainly set their children on from the moment they can toddle after you; but we it is, most precious verdant-greens, who have created all this pleasant running accompaniment at the heels of our perpetual motion.

Digitized by Google

From the port of Baia we ascend the hill to *Baoli*, a small village on the promontory of Messinum, where, having descended and admired the "Pescine Mirabile" (the immense fresh-water reservoir), with its forty-eight columns and arches underground, — how everything we look at should humble our modern conceit! — the horses are taken out at a *locanda* just beyond it, in the town, and we walk on, over the promontory, to where there is a fine view of its extreme projection towards the sea, where it ends in a singular wedge-shaped bluff, only connected by a narrow strip of sand, which forms a low beach to the north, inclosing a piece of water, or small lagoon, called the Dead Sea — the ancient fish-preserve, as it is to this day, I believe. This sheet of water, cut off from the sea, is in turn only separated on the south side of the promontory from the port itself of Messinum. Here oysters are propagated, said to be the most delicate — as of old.

There were, however, not above two or three fishermen's boats on the shore, not a sail in the bay, nor the least activity anywhere within the vast range of the eye, sea and land — all barren, sterile beauty, including Procida and the beautiful Ischia beyond it.

To the south, far as the eye can reach in the blue hazy distance, across the deeper blue of the bay, lie Capri and the coast about Sorrento and Salerno's cape.

However, it is but fair to say, that a few, very few,

Digitized by Google

Latine coasters and fishermen's boats are generally to be seen in the bay. Pity there are not a great many more. The Mergellina and the Procida fishermen are not nearly so numerous and stirring as even I can recollect them, — in the same way that the whole population of Naples, if not of the kingdom, has declined of late years. And as to trade in the port, it is extremely languid. I hardly saw an English, French, or American flag among the brigs and sloops at the Mole. While the custom-house and its branches on the *Piliera* is large enough for the whole world! Their chief employment seems in rummaging unhappy travellers' trunks, making you pay a duty for any or every trifle, even if evidently for your own use; but liberal Sardinia is just as bad!

This promontory ends excursions in carriages. We did not walk down to the port, or to the Dead Sea (indeed, we had left the carriage-road down), content to contemplate afar the ruins of one of Lucullus' villas, on a tongue of rock which forms the east side of the port. The sea breaking now and then on the hidden rocks quite across the harbour's mouth, it is only fit for boats.

Nothing can be done without eating. Happily, here there is no hotel; but we had a spread under the trellice of a peasant's cottage before the door: people come here to refresh themselves, bringing their own eatables to this sort of wine-house. The

Digitized by Google

vine (except its stalk) is nowhere visible as yet, and a cloth supplied the want of its leafy shade, thrown over the rafters. The sun at noonday now, even so early in the spring, is very hot, though the nights and mornings are cool enough.

A half-starved cat and dog shared our cold chicken and tongue; nor did a quiet donkey fail to taste of our bread, which he gave evident tokens of liking better than munching at a bundle of canes. It is certain that all these people appear very poor and miserable; and if they do not absolutely want themselves, they care very little about their poor dumb creatures, who must shift for themselves the best way they can. One sees this disposition at Naples — a hardness towards their dogs, cats, donkeys, quite equal to anything that may be seen in England; their cab and carriage horses quite as ill fed, and almost as hardly treated. A Neapolitan never gives his horse any respite, and they pile on immense loads, quite indifferent to the capacity of the poor beasts; still it is a shade less atrocious than our omnibus cruelties.

This is not the way to see anything to advantage; one should be alone—on foot—with ample time: indeed, one should have a room at Baoli; then take walks further on round the coast, cross and recross to Procida, which is quite close, and so well look at and consider a thousand interesting ruins — once,—what? Take some

Digitized by Google

boatman into pay, and some peasant as a guide, making them understand that attempts at extortion will be of no use — for they will of course cling to any possible chance; since, not a doubt, they take us all for a pack of fools, if not quite escaped from Bedlam! and made of piastres fresh from the mines of Peru (for they know nothing of California or Australia!). But above all, one should know something of the people's language.

Baoli is rich in ruins, very visible in their vineyards. There is a kind of shop on the hill, full of vases, lachrymals, urns, &c. Close beside the road, returning, we pass the platform-vaulted roof of the "miraculous" reservoir, and through certain low arches or holes look down into the vaults below. Oh, that we had such brickwork in London as one everywhere sees peeping out among these sleepy, ignorant boors' figs and vines, beans and peas. Wherever the women are at work, it is either washing, or, at their primitive distaff, spinning flaxen thread. The great art is to give it the requisite whirl; but there is an art, and not an easy one, in every acquirement, however easy or common it may seem: we have but to try it, to be convinced! We gallop about the world and do nothing. Could we but hit the art intuitive, of admiring in the right place, it would be something to say; for as to facts, there is little new to be struck out: it must lie in the telling. We had Murray's book with us; but who can read!

Digitized by Google

those who forget, must consult it; but, were I equal to it, a repetition here would be, indeed, stale as a twice-told tale: but I know nothing—I could not even cram for the occasion.

After all we are poor weak creatures — weak every way. I felt an ecstatic relief on alighting from my uneasy seat in the carriage, washing the dust out of my eyes, and in the quiet absence of the worrying of the whole day's *pleasure!* But this is the heaviest tax of sight-seeing — every item of antiquity has its particular worry — cicerone, beggars, dust, hours being doubled up in the torture of a small carriage, the inevitable expense, and final headache. *Youth*, and a *first time*, makes a wonderful difference. It can afford to laugh at everything; a bath and a dinner adds to each day's zest for novelty and excitement, besides new mines of fresh ideas to work on!

Passing along the *Largo di Palazzo*, yesterday, I saw a fat old lady leaning on the arm of an attendant dame, limping with an air of authority round the balcony of the palace—some lady of the court; but though I have been in Naples now two weeks, I have not yet once seen the king out.

I fully meant to have been presented at court, but Mr. (now Sir William) Temple is not here; and, besides, this is Lent, so I must give it up. Indeed I have not yet found out the palazzo of our ambas-

Digitized by Google

sador; it is not on the Chiaia — nor indeed is the Chiaia the most aristocratic residence. It is something like our Piccadilly or Pall Mall, for lodgings, hôtels, and travellers. And so it should be, shut out from the palace side, Vesuvius, and the sweep of the rich shores of Portici, and Torre del Greco, even to Pompeii.

This kind of garden promenade (the Villa Reale), and carriage drive, brings this way all the *beau monde* towards four o'clock; but our view is only to the solitary sea; Capri and Sorrentum in the distant blue hazy horizon, for there are not even a few pleasure boats. If any of the Mole or St. Lucia boatmen come round, it is with some express fare, and back again, as a matter of business; yet is there every facility for landing — stone steps, and very smooth water, considering this part is quite open to the outer bay. The Mergellina fishing people, at the other end of the garden, never come near, not even in their boats; the larger kind go well out in the bay, and round the coast.

As I cannot turn courtier, I set off on my travels to the city of the dead, in company with a young Frenchman, who managed the thing admirably as to economy, as he is pretty well versed in the lingo and tricks of these good folks.

The weather continues sunny and fine — the best

Digitized by Google

half of all excursions; indeed indispensable, no matter where. We were too late for the twelve o'clock train (the trains are few, and far between — the next in three hours), so, after an immense war of bargaining words, we hired a carriage near the station for a piastre This I could see was a close bargain, even in the eyes of our jehu, who asked two, and not very unconscionably; however he consoled himself with an *arrière pensée* — to get rid of us on the road half-way back Now, in truth, the distance must be ten miles,— and to wait for us and "bring us back to the Largo di Castello!" This shows what can be done by French travellers.

The dust, and houses all along the road, take away all the pleasure one anticipates in the drive round this far-off, magnificent scenery. When not towns and suburbs, then the villas and high walls shut out everything on the sea side, and nearly all on the mountain side. I forget what Pompeii was forty years ago; but there is no doubt it is of late years much more *improved* than Naples itself — much has been discovered, and the whole is kept clean and in strict good order.

All the show temples and remarkable domiciles are under lock and key, each with its custodium, who separately expects a small fee, and some attendant imp another, for sweeping off the inch or two thick of black sand or ashes with which they take care to keep the

Digitized by Google

few mosaics left on the floors covered — so that nothing is to be seen "*senza denari;*" besides the great fee expected by the uniformed official who leads you about: thus, it is best to go, if possible, in a large party, by way of lightening the burthen. Whether these officials give up these fees, I know not; but they are meanly saddled on the curious *forestieri* by government. There is, too, a guard of soldiers and sentinels at both gates.

We did not, as of old, enter by the street of tombs, but at the new gate further on east, and more towards Castela Mare, which lies very prettily in sight, and a straggling village half-way up the snow-capped mountains, above it. Seen from any of the Pompeii street-openings, this mountain view is most magnificent.

But our business is with these silent painted walls — these beautiful temples, still beautiful, even in their ruins. One must not imagine that Pompeii is only curious. How exquisite in colour and design, are many of the small fresco paintings, still left! for all the very finest, as well as all the statues, and marbles, and mosaics, possible, have been taken away, and are lodged now in the Museum. Even the museum of treasures in bronze, &c., once at Portici, is now at Naples.

But first of the history of this city. The thing is settled that it was *suddenly* covered by *ashes alone* from the eruption of Vesuvius, which is here very far from it, in profile. I cannot understand it — much less "*sud-*

Digitized by Google

denly;" but then one must doubt the Latin historians. The fact is plain enough — there remains only the *how* to puzzle one! No matter; this is no time to enter into the laws of projectiles, though I have seen proofs drawn from a ship's deck being powdered in the bay, on some remarkable eruption — rather a childish confirmation. Here it is, plain enough; nature's *modus operandi* never can be known exactly. The skeletons, the keys, the bread already baked in the shops — all as if to impress the fact of the instant overwhelming — only puzzle me the more, from any possible quantity of ashes thrown such a height, and falling so far off!

We were hurried along the *mercury*, the *soap*, and the *mercantile* streets, and through the forums, theatres, and temples and distinguished houses, so fast that there was no time to observe or digest anything — how describe it! — even if it had not been so often and so much better done than I can attempt. I feel, indeed, that it would require a month, nay, a year, living on the spot, and untrammelled by officials, to read to any purpose these silent, but most eloquent mementos! Here, as everywhere, how admirable the brickwork, where stripped of its stuccos! those stuccos, in turn, how admirable! and, when painted, how exquisite! except, I think, in the larger ones — the Ulysses and Penelope, the Diana and Acteon, the grand hunt, and in some of the landscapes, looking a little Chinese. But where there are small defects of drawing or perspective, the thing is

Digitized by Google

even enhanced in interest, for, not to talk of the arts then rising or declining, these are the citizens' houses—some employed cheaper and worse artists, others had no taste themselves. Several grottos of shells, as fountains or altars, though beautifully done, show a true citizen taste, as one may see in the villas and small garden ornaments about London nowadays. One, with little comical marble statues and groups in a joyous circle, presided over by Master Bacchus in his niche, is quite charming; and how well of them to have left it in its little court, in its own veritable house!—in the museum at Naples it would have been lost—nothing; for the figures are in a bad style of art, though in themselves inimitable, as showing us a domestic interior of the middle classes.

None of the covered pavement mosaics are more than curious. All the fine ones, at all moveable, have been removed to Naples. They have put up a parcel of paltry yellow-painted gates, under padlock, quite enough to destroy all illusion, together with the officials, and the rude, ignorant soldiery, who warned us off as we approached some newly discovered and finely painted apartments, in the north-east quarter (here I marked one lovely angel with blue wings), in the direction of the Grand Amphitheatre, beyond the supposed walls, half a mile off; to which our stupid cicerone refused to take us, pleading want of time; and, in truth,

Digitized by Google

it was as much as ever we could do, at a full trot, to go over the chief places, reserving the doctor's house, the baker's, the mills, the great arcaded caravansarai, or inn, the end city wall, at the Street of Tombs, and the Diomed Villa, to the last. His cellar is not unlike an underground cloister of three sides: here are the greatest number of wine-jars, or amphoræ, in triple rows against the vault walls, standing on end, as if full of wine, just as left. But these jars are seen in many of the houses, of various shapes and sizes, some let into the counters of the shops, for wine or oil; some for water, and of very elegant shapes, though so plain and so common. How is it that, in all these last fifty years (Italy has been always open to us), we have not copied them more closely in our own domestic utensils? — we might so easily, to so much advantage, without paying such exorbitant prices for mere beauty of shape as we still do. By the bye, near Baoli, there is a store-house full of charming vases, to be had reasonably enough, if you don't come with a party and in a carriage, or if you can talk enough to beat them down, or if you can afford to load yourself with objects of *vertu*.

The streets do not appear to me so narrow as they once did, nor the houses so small — the streets still paved by the very flagstones, their curbs, and their stepping-stones for rainy seasons, and the flagstones

Digitized by Google

marked by the track of the wheels. I find the breadth of the carriage-way from ten to twelve feet, and the side-walks five or six feet — more than some of our country towns can boast; but even here, in this country town, what noble dimensions in their Forum, the Halls of Justice and Senators! how magnificent in their columns and ornaments, the strength of the walls, the profusion of marble, the grandeur and solidity of their theatres, their schools, nay, in everything, not to mention the temples and baths, always unapproachable in beauty and sublimity of conception, of which time itself and barbarism have not robbed them!

From an absorbing interest— from the most ennobling and disinterested thoughts—from the sublime—we must descend to the ridiculous; from Diomed's House to the modern wooden barrier of the Street of Tombs; this *via mausoliæ* to the sentinels, and to our payment of our particular harpy. Gravely lifting his hat, my friend presented him with four carlini, at which, so far from being delighted, he grumbled and growled not a little, saying there would be *nothing left for himself!* Do they then give this up to the superior harpies, who, no doubt, farm this dead city of the King?

We had already shelled out two dozen grani among the inferior sweeping imps and other key-keepers of padlocks, and my French friend was quite inexorable, well backed by myself, I confess. Time was when

Digitized by Google

four carlini would have perhaps been thought tolerable; but we travelling English, at any rate, run riot against all ideas of economy, and give I know not what at all these places, and are, indeed, ourselves the sole cause of the universal increased greediness everywhere on our track, at home or on the Continent.

The Americans, who feel bound to go ahead of us, and beat us at everything "into the middle of next week," even outdo us at the hotels, the cafés, and at all the sight-seeing places, in tipping the servants. The punishment for enjoying this petty distinction recoils on us at the rebound, and serves us right.

There is a spice of malice at the bottom of this snob's glory of "d——ing the expense" of anything, to annoy quieter people who must needs follow in his footsteps, and can only be thought genteel by bleeding freely and foolishly—to avoid, however (as the mischief is done), the plague and annoyance of debating the point, sour looks, and muttered sarcasms, which follow close on the heels of the most obsequious carriage, and "*vostra Excellenza!*"

In all this there should be no surprise—no wonder. In this land the few are princes, marquises, counts, and are bowed to and flattered as the only lords of creation. There is no medium—all who dress well, and ride in carriages, are, or should be, great lords; and travellers serve a double purpose—to be treated as princes! not

Digitized by Google

only by the rabble, but the selling class: all are either great seigneurs or nothing. There is hardly a citizen class, and the idea of their ever quitting their small shop-counters is preposterous. All is servile humility—and a benign, smiling, patronising arrogance: a pure giving on the one hand, and humble, fawning, begging, receiving, on the other. The clergy are, too, supreme. They strut and drive about much as the once French abbés, or they follow the princely example of the Roman cardinals and dignitaries as closely as possible. There is hardly any middle, or merchant class, and they live isolated, forming no sort of link between the high and low.

How comparatively a very short distance over Europe, up to our Isles, alters climate and the weather! now, this whole winter has been, though unusually cold, yet an almost constant bright sunshine, all round this coast —the north and north-east winds the coldest, of course.

Here now the days are quite fine; they rarely begin cloudy, or the opposite shores obscured: if calm, the sun breaks out about ten or eleven, and is so hot at noon and afternoon, as to make the shade welcome.

I have said there is no watering of the streets; but, as I watch from my window the goings-on in the Chiaia below me, I this morning see what creates the two slender strips of what I took to be done by a watering-pot, for a few yards here, just at the entrance of the

Digitized by Google

Gardens and Chiaia. Two fellows have a barrel mounted on wheels, on each side: at one end are bored two auger-holes, and the water spirts out as they trot along with it—not a bad contrivance; if it is rather primitive, it answers well enough for the very little bit they do.

Here too (at the corner of the Strada St. Catarina), in the square in front of the Garden-gate, there is a stand of hack carriages and cabs, which bawl and make signs to all us *forestieri*. Here are always violets made up in bunches, and enormous bouquets for sale, of mignonette, small Chinese roses, violets and camelias. The fellows carrying them run after every carriage that passes, and after every person on foot, if they look at all English or foreign — and they are wonderfully certain of their game; like the lads who hawk about walking-sticks, they ask at least five times as much as they mean to take, if beat down. They pretend to leave you, but are sure to return, following you about like the cabs, which run after you the moment you stir—fresh ones spying you out as you walk along, and insisting on your taking them: in vain you shake your head. In this way I found the minimum at which I could have them, or get rid of them.

The flocks of goats driven, indeed, rather led, about the streets, are very remarkable; so docile and obedient to their goatherds, threading their way admirably in the

Digitized by Google

crowded streets, or all collecting quietly at some door. Cows, their calves with them, are led about to milk in the same way. The goats are even driven up and down long flights of stairs — I think I have heard them in this house, up on the third floor. This, indeed, is not at all a high range of houses — the first on the Chiaia; and yet I think I am sixty feet above the street: in fact the houses in all the leading thoroughfares are on a grand scale; the gateways of the palazzi and court-yards magnificent in their proportions — wide stone staircases, vaulted rooms, antichambers, arcades.

The churches are, however, not at all *very* remarkable, either in size or beauty of their interior — far inferior to the Genoese. Still, like most on the Continent, there are many fine things in them — columns, statues, paintings and altars — which are only not looked after or admired, from the astonishing number and superior beauty of the antique scattered here in such profusion.

I retract a little of what I say of this Chiaia garden ("Villa Reale"): the farther end has two small temples; it is more wild and shaded — more like a garden; then, again, the Lion, Europa, and other fountains, are handsome, though they spout but driblets of water; and the statues numerous; few or no flowers, indeed, except some stocks and camelias japonica; but this is still hardly beyond winter, and I see they are planting flowers, and dressing the beds. There is a café in it,

Digitized by Google

and two shops for the sale of views of Naples and the bay, characteristics of the country, &c.; but these coloured prints are not only very inferior, but at high prices, much more than they are worth: as mere pictures they are very so-so.

In the streets I constantly meet schools, the boys walking two and two, invariably followed in charge of their schoolmaster—a priest, in his immense shovel hat (the Don Basilio of the stage is hardly a caricature on their appearance—their long black gowns, and sanctified look; the greater part of them very young men). All these boy-scholars of their various seminaries are invariably in uniform, much as in France and Piedmont—blue frock-coats or tunics, and ornamented caps: here, however, they all wear cocked-hats of a small, neat shape, a little after the fashion of Napoleon's. The navy, too, has its cadets at school, and they make a good show. The King bestows some pains and money on his steam navy.

Monks range the streets in their sandals and brown cloaks and hoods, and that knotted cord—*not* meant to whip themselves with! Of these, all sorts of orders, some in white, whity-brown, and shovel hats—very smart—walking on the promenade among the gay world, together with those who seem to me the abbati, in half-canonicals, breeches, and black silk stockings—Naples, indeed, swarms with these cure-less clergy;—

Digitized by Google

the bishops in purple hose; but I have not seen any dignitaries on foot. Indeed nobody walks that can afford any sort of vehicle, except us travellers occasionally; not that it is any longer very vulgar to walk, but the Neapolitans, from the prince to the beggar, love to ride. I constantly see their two-wheeled *cariolas* crammed with a swarm of twelve or fourteen clinging to it behind, before, and underneath; the driver behind, cracking his whip, and at a full trot; the shafts sticking away above the little horse's back, in the air, and bells jingling. They are still very fond of jingling sounds, and monstrous brass ornaments on the harness, in the lower world.

The King has a Swiss regiment or two, and his own Royal Guard are good-looking men, their uniform blue and white lace (red trowsers), not unlike the Garde Royale of the Bourbons.

The artillery is horsed by mules: a couple of hundred of them often pass the Chiaia for exercise. They do not strike me as at all particularly fine — not equal to the Spanish or the American; still they are a hardy, excellent animal, and deserve to be in high esteem. All the horses here are small, and spoiled evidently by their riders, who are, one and all, miserable horsemen: the show cavaliers on the Chiaia are, from their fine air and awkward seat — really funny.

I have been again to the Museum — the oftener one

Digitized by Google

goes, the more impressed one is by the endless treasures it contains. Perhaps, to have the least idea — the least clear recollection of what meets the eye in such profusion, in every excellence of art and beauty — one special suite of rooms should be a morning's study; and even then you cannot look at, examine, and wonder and admire everything as it deserves: not a year would suffice,— perhaps not a life!

The most curious, from Pompeii alone, would take one month of attentive industry. To-day I went into the mosaics and paintings, on the left hand, as you enter from the hall. To describe is impossible; but here is proof, a thousand-fold, of their masterly drawing, their command of colour, and their infinite taste and variety, in every possible way, not a little in spirit and expression — life or still life — men, women, or animals.

Here one sees (and from all antique art) how much the moderns, back to the middle ages, stole from them, without any sort of acknowledgment! Well may one say there is nothing new under the sun. How many ideas of beauty and grace have they not given us! But it is not alone the beauty, it is the prodigious interest attached to the least thing — the least perfect; indeed, one loses sight of the comparative perfection. Then, again, in the groups, the heads, the arabesques, the ornamental architecture, birds, beasts, fishes.

Some of the things are but sketches; others evi-

Digitized by Google

dently done by rapid hands, and inimitably, which did not condescend to finish, or work up — or it was done at so much the room, by contract.

There are four remarkable mosaic columns, with shells — the Graces, in mosaic, and a young man, in the first room, very remarkable: but it is in vain speaking of any ones or twos. Their war galleys (in the border of a room) are very spirited: here we see their shape, steered by two rudders — a single bank of oars. A sign of a hotel or eating house, with fish, game, &c. A man charming two cobra di capellos is very curious.

In this ground-floor suite of rooms are two tables set out — boards of green cloth: the one in the large outer room is of great size; and both with chairs round them for the council or committee.

There are, too, four good modern pictures by Neapolitan artists (Bible subjects), and a recently modelled monument or two, all excellently done — but it seems a profanation to bring them here! Nor can I help thinking (now that the bare walls are so carefully locked and guarded), how much better it would have been to have left these most interesting relics in the very houses, courts, baths, temples, &c. where they were found at Pompeii.

On the spot, and in their places, how infinitely more the interest! The buildings are robbed, and these, their ornaments, are ruthlessly cut away from their

Digitized by Google

proper places, and put in wooden frames. Each would thus tell, how much more plainly! its own tale. To be sure they are all *numbered*, and you may be referred, in some catalogue, to its once whereabout; but who can wade through a catalogue, and refer, on a brief visit, to it? Besides, all these precious things are in a very bad light — we can see little or nothing of those under the windows.

Mine was but a hasty glimpse. I could have lingered untired for hours; but I wanted to see the bronzes upstairs — and they are in thousands of every possible thing, in every possible variety, and the most beautiful shapes, even in the commonest tools and utensils. Civilised mankind, as we know them to this day, have done nothing but copy, clumsily and flimsily, some few of their fine shapes; while in the ornamental, chaste, and elegant, we do not yet approach them. The infinite variety of ornament in the same things, as well as shape, is very striking; from boilers, kettles, saucepans, up to their tripods, candelabra, lamps, urns, lares and penates,— all the statuettes are exquisite.

In these bronze rooms are some of the floor-mosaics of Pompeii — that of the Medusa (the head) in the last room: they were cleaning it. All the bronzes, &c. are kept in glass cases, numbered, and in the greatest regularity and order. In the last (the Medusa room) are two soldiers' skulls, enclosed in their own two helmets.

Digitized by Google

Some of these helmets and swords are exquisite; many cases contain ivory bodkins, needles, and wooden tools, and household things, still unhurt and sound — perfect.

I am betrayed into an attempt to describe — but volumes would not suffice; and guide books, I believe, (for I, unfortunately, am without Murray—the best,) mention all the very remarkable things — if it were possible to choose in such a rich profusion.

An opposite room, on the first floor (right hand ascending), is the gold ornament room. The centre of it (you step on the dog in the mosaic floor—"cave canem") is wholly occupied by the richest collection of bracelets, ear-rings, rings, chains; in short, all sorts of most beautiful women's ornaments — cameos and intaglios by hundreds (all under glass cases), of inconceivable variety and beauty, and in all the precious stones except the diamond.

At the head of these last, swung between two golden serpents, is the great onyx cameo: it is a basin, at the bottom of which is the cameo (inside) — the story of Alexander, or the apotheosis of Ptolemy and the propitious winds; the scene, Egypt: there are five figures. On the opposite side (on the bottom) is a Medusa's head, occupying the whole circle, perhaps ten or eleven inches in diameter.

It would be nonsense to insist on its exquisite con-

Digitized by Google

ception, execution, and finish — to say nothing of the value of the onyx: the world could not purchase such another. But this may be said of thousands of things here, at Rome, and all over Italy — relics of our great masters in everything: these same heathens, who were innocent of steam and chemistry!

The gold ornaments divide one's admiration. What delicate beauty! what variety! Some are in gold tissue bands, wove of gold thread — one found on a Moor would eclipse anything at Hunt's or Howell and James's; but no single thing is without some peculiar excellence.

What a treasure is here to enrich the ideas of modern jewellers! To be sure some few are copied — but how very few! The modern jewellery in Naples (mosaic, lava, and coral poorly set) is miserable stuff, comparatively, without the shadow of an excuse — except stupidity. Even those we call barbarians approach nearer to this exquisite taste, delicacy, and variety of the ancients, — the Indians and Malays; and that, too, with the rudest, most simple tools.

Round this room, in the cases, are some of the greatest curiosities found at Pompeii: the purse found with the coin in it, on the woman in Diomed's house; bread making, and made; vegetables in their kettles, and meats; onions; lumps of linen and of clothes, some charred, some not; a large piece of wood, still sound.

Digitized by Google

Then, again, a number of paints, of all the colours, found in a painter's shop. But I must have done: one might be every day for a month in this single room — with exemplary diligence and industry, with one's mind on the stretch, unflagging — and yet not know or appreciate a tenth of its contents, even superficially. One leaves it, in this way, bewildered,— full of wonder, of admiration, and of humility.

I must no longer talk of this museum — indeed, I cannot: its arrangement, and the care taken of everything, is perhaps the best possible.

All the various keepers of the keys, as they lock you in and out, and follow you about, *expect fees*, and get them, although there is a notice forbidding it. Not only this, but their officiousness is a nuisance. If you pass on and wish to see things quietly and alone, they are sulky: you need give them nothing indeed, on passing out; but our people, and now even the Italians, all fee them, more or less — and it becomes peremptory. It is everywhere in public, what it is in the houses of our nobility and gentry at home; in vain the servants may be told not to take gratifications — in vain the noble host may tell his friends of his *invariable* rule,— they will — nay, they must do it.

On leaving, how are you to express your thanks or your goodwill to housekeepers, valets, stablemen,

Digitized by Google

porters, chambermaids, &c.? Mere smiling thanks would be sneered at, and laughed at, as a sneaking meanness, — thanks, indeed — oh cruel irony! But these *custodii* have no claim on you whatever, except what they officiously create in spite of you. The museums indeed are not to be compared with show houses. But I look back at home with great satisfaction on our more liberal freedom in our own museums; — and if at our show places, cathedrals, &c., it is just as bad, at least it is not the fault of the servants so much as of their masters and those in authority.

It appears that of late the King has taken this grand national concern entirely to himself as his private property. It belongs no longer to the public; it enters by favour. I have glanced at the marbles; and there is a second suite of rooms of the Pompeian mosaics and paintings, opposite the one I have mentioned on the ground-floor at the entrance.

But all within its doors claims one's undivided, unqualified admiration — the noble vestibule, the rivers (allegorical), the colossal Jove and Hercules — the equestrian statues on each side are modern and faulty — the lion, between the double flight of the grand staircase; even the modern colossal statue of Ferdinando Primo Borbonico, its founder or greatest patron.

The library is a noble room (the chief one), to which all students have access under certain regulations,

Digitized by Google

written in tablets on each side of the door at the centre of the first landing.

I should say, if I can at all rely on a hasty glance, that its modern pictures, or those of the middle ages, have nothing particularly attractive — though no doubt interesting, had one but time! — compared with what are seen at Rome, Bologna, and Florence. But in Italy you can go nowhere without some great attraction in the fine arts, ancient or modern; you become fagged and oppressed by them, and long to rest your eyes and your senses on the *sea* or a tree, or ——I escape into the streets.

The Strada Catarina, cutting across from the "*villa reale*" (garden) gate to the palace end of the Toledo, is one of the constantly crowded thoroughfares — after the Toledo, the most so. Then comes the Largo de Palazzo, Largo de Castello, to the Mole, and the quay, leading by the custom house, eastward, to the railway station along the *Piliero.*

Out to the Porta de Capua is another crowded street, eastward, near the top of Strada Toledo, and the broad new road crossing it to the *Campo Santo,* running by the museum. In this suburb there is a fine and immense building, the *Albergo Dei Poveri,* the workhouse, or *Hôtel Dieu.* Two small movable bridges are seen in the centre of this street, showing what torrents pour

Digitized by Google

along in the rains. There are two or three other narrow long streets, constantly crowded, running across to the upper and lower parts of the city; but they are seldom entered by strangers. Losing my way towards the Porta de Capua, among the various narrow cross streets, in one of my rambles, I got my pocket picked! They are said to be very expert, but I doubt much if they are as *au-fait* as our own light-fingered gentry. Some of the guide books tell you, your purse and your watch are not safe as you walk along anywhere. Quite an exaggeration. In my own case I was too careless; and my handkerchief, I am now convinced, was visible to any one walking behind me, from the stupid way our tailors have of leaving such immense openings to our coat pockets.

I find the boatmen want five and six piastres to go to Procida and Ischia—at this rate, 'tis better to go by the little steamboat which runs to them twice a-week; although the fare—a piastre, four shillings and sixpence, or indeed five shillings, as we get it now—is nearly five times as much as our steamers take us for the same distance: it is about fifteen miles from the Mole, round.

They return the next day—and one must sleep at the Hôtel. To Capri these same boats charge two piastres—very little farther—to see the blue grotto. This of the three is the only island in sight from any part of Naples; lying south, off the Cape of Salerno, it forms the

Digitized by Google

ordinary passage for the ships and steamers along the Calabrian coast to Messina, Malta, &c.

The Neapolitans are a good-natured, easy set of creatures, content with very little; for it is only those in the principal streets, brought in contact with foreigners, particularly us silly English, who are, one may say, made greedy and unconscionable—shop and lodging-house keepers, hotels, cabs, and watermen. They make an immense noise talking; but I have seen no quarrelling, nor any drunkenness; indeed, few have the means for more than the simplest wants of nature — bread and water; the last is sold about the streets in small earthern jars! though there are plenty of running fountains.

Indian corn bread, maccaroni, boiled potatoes, chestnuts, fried fish, a sort of beans, melon seeds and small nuts, large cockles — oysters are a delicacy, and too dear — muscles, periwinkles, eels, blubber, and all sorts of refuse of the sea — raw, fried, boiled — are the things one sees as their *relishes*. Meat they can rarely touch of any sort. Fruits in the season no doubt help out and are the luxury; the better vegetables in the same way— but just now the apples, bad as they are, and pears, at two grani each, or grapes, are quite beyond their reach. Dried figs, raisins, and chestnuts, all of the poorest, dirtiest, worst description, they can perhaps manage to taste of sparingly; and this, with a little bit of coarse bread

Digitized by Google

or Indian corn bread, or fried in cakes, is their dinner. I question whether they can have more than one meal a day. I mention their sheer and professional beggars; but, after all, unless you are in a carriage at some shop door, they are easily shook off. There is, however, a French pastry cook near this, a few steps up the Strada de Chiaia, opposite the British consulate, frequented by all the low, where it must surely be an infliction to eat a cake or an ice — the door and windows constantly crowded by these wretched creatures, watching every mouthful, whining, moaning, praying, supplicating! I have indeed seen the French mistress of this pastry cook's driving them off, when there were none of her customers inside.

Our ambassador's, at the *Palazzo Policastre*, is back up narrow streets, under the St. Ermo hill, off the centre of the garden, and overlooking the cavalry barracks; a part of the town one does not immediately suspect. Our church meets on Sundays in one of the saloons of the consulate.

As there is only the secretary here, Mr. Lowther, and as it is Lent, there is no chance of a presentation: all the reception balls, &c., at the King's palace ended with the carnival; and his majesty is staying at the *Favorita* palace, out of town.

For the view from your windows, decidedly the best place in Naples is the *St. Lucia*, from the Strada de

Digitized by Google

Giganti to the King's Lodge, at the turn by the *Ovo* castle. But then the *St. Lucia* is not considered fashionable, though so near the palace: it is full of small, mean, dirty huckster shops -- fish salesmen, fishermen and their nets, with a row along the wall, of tubs of oysters and other shell fish, backed by ranges of very common shells for sale. All the minor household occupations of the rabble are going on on the side walk: clothes drying, stockings mending and nets, eel pots making (very neatly), and head hunting! in short, it is a second Mergellina.

In one of the storehouses I see bread given to the poor by tickets, and a very orderly crowd of poor women still clamouring to be heard — claim upon claim decided by a superintendent. All this, I conclude, although there are a sprinkling of coral shops and engravers mixed up, brings this very desirable spot to a discount. However, here are the *Hôtels de Russie* and *Rome*, and very good-looking lodgings to let, "*qui si laca*" *or* "*stanze mobiliate*" stuck up to entice lodgers.

Here, by the by, are the seamen's barracks, a large body of them, and very good-looking men; well dressed, swords by their sides, they march about to the beat of their drums! But everything in Naples is fierce, military. They share what little swagger and consequence there is with the Police.

Digitized by Google

Already March has half fled. How time with active wing dances on towards summer! Nature revives, buds put forth; the gardeners in the kitchen gardens on the flat Capua road are all busy, and watering their beds carefully — not till required, for the weather remains very dry, and the sun gets hotter and hotter, cold as the winds and nights continue.

I drove out on the upper new road by the Museum, to the brow of the hills which sweep partly close round Naples to the Campo Santo, about four miles from the Toledo. All this spot is entirely changed within these last five-and-twenty years, when one saw nothing but the horrid space down which, through the holes, they threw the bodies — one hole for every day in the year. Vast buildings now inclose all this; and the brow of the hill, as it descends into the old Capua road, is now very tastefully laid out and filled with monuments and mausolea, after the manner of *Père-la-chaise*, or our own cemeteries; with a profusion of chapels. Some of the monuments and tombs are very fine. Flowers and shrubs are cultivated with great care; indeed, there are more flowers here than I have seen anywhere else — the geraniums are particularly fine. I sauntered about among these parterres, alleys, and groves — inevitably sad!

And yet I would avoid all that puts me in mind of my own particular misfortune. Oh, how vain are words! how vain these marble mementos! We must go hence —

Digitized by Google

a few fleeting years, flying accelerated from beneath our feet in age, and we are no more. If ambition, yonder but a little way off—in the palace, at the head of regiments, or the fleet—will come some still hour and walk here alone—quite alone—it might cure of too much greediness!

And how, in this mood, all human greatness and pretension sink to a contemptible nothing! Well, at this moment, that spoiled autocrat, barbarian of the north, *will* rob others, and compels a war—our troops across the Mediterranean are rushing to battle! Old veterans, after forty years in the lap of idleness and luxury, are flattered by command, even with one foot in the grave—and Vane Londonderry not of them!—no, I see he lies in some other quiet place. And youthful Cambridge is to try his hand. What if *the* Duke could burst his cerements, and see his secretary the Xenophon of the day—no, not the Xenophon, for retreat is not contemplated!

Our fine new fleets, too, in the Bosphorus and at Spithead are weighing their anchors for the attack; and Sir Charles, at seventy, the only tried man, takes the lion's share of anxiety and danger. One must wish, in spite of the Peace Society and our own tameness, the crushing of that northern nest of Goths and Vandals, who still will creep to the south, to conquer and destroy; as once in fair Italy.

Digitized by Google

But ask for conquering and conquered in a few brief years! You shall find them as still as here, on this hill side, with this rich plain and sea extended, still smiling in the sun,—the same—the same, to the end of the chapter! Why, it was but yesterday Nelson and his proud fleet rounded yon point;—there is Capri, but where the fleet—the living creatures? Some few, mayhap, hobbling about in old age—"*sans* everything;"—as well ask for a fish of yesterday's haul.

Just let me glance, in this marble chamber, through these fine brass doors, beneath this pompous eulogy! This good man disdains company, and has all this pile of stone to himself.

They sleep as well, and much less confined, on each other pell-mell in the last day's paupers' hole higher up, and the quicklime gets rid of long festering—a horrid idea! and yet are we in love with it. Why do we not, like the old Romans, burn our dead? But we are a degenerate race, and a more silly race. Why, any grave is better than a regular modern one! Far down in the blue sea—beautiful! or your bones picked clean under the odoriferous pine of some wild forest, or dried inoffensive on the hot sands of the sweet desert; but a modern grave—faugh!

This cemetery occupies the brow of the hill, just below the chapel and buildings of the establishment. Workmen are still enlarging, laying out, and extend-

Digitized by Google

ing it downwards. I drove in from the upper road, and returned down hill, through its chief avenue, to the lower road; by which I entered Naples, by the Porta di Capua. They are busy watering the kitchen-gardens by the road-side; but nothing like our nurseries or flower-gardens relieves the eye, or tufted foliage, or green fields, or lawns anywhere — all is glare and dust.

In all Naples I see but two itinerant, houseless, shopless flower-sellers. Nothing settled or numerous as with us, at the gardens or at the shops of our florists, or at all approaching the regular business it is in Paris. The best here is under my window. On the Chiaia two or three of these fellows make up their enormous bouquets on the dwarf wall of the garden. This is their early morning's work. Then all day they run after the carriages, offering them at high rates, if they can get them — three, four, or six carlini; but if not sold, they will take *one or less*, as they have no sort of rule about price; indeed, it must depend on caprice or accident. Gentlemen with ladies (always a catch) are found customers very often, as they will run half down the Chiaia, holding on the carriage-door; and can then exact any sum, particularly from the English or French.

The one other place is a poor stand or stall-corner of a house, a little way up the Toledo; but the flowers

Digitized by Google

are more common, fewer camelias or roses, and they are not made up into any sort of nosegay: this would be all the better if one could stop in the street to do it oneself. The Italian beaux stick bunches of violets in their button-hole, and make a point of handling their cigars magnanimously in yellow kids, as supreme ton.

Altogether, I think the men at Naples handsome, more so, comparatively, than the women; and their ample dark beards and moustache become them. But now I am on the theme of beauty and flowers, it must be confessed that even the French in Paris, though they exceed us in the number (and the excessive price too) of their flower stalls, yet are their nosegays not half so beautiful or odoriferous, nor set off anything like so richly or tastefully as ours, in their lace-paper envelopes, as we can get them at all seasons in Covent Garden, and often all over town, at our greenhouses and fruiterers, besides those sold by poor girls in Regent and Oxford Streets!

Nor can one anywhere on the Continent see the same variety or profusion in summer; to say nothing of our unique and inimitable Chiswick and Botanic, &c. flower shows, or of our thousands of public and private gardens.

Paris in the summer, however, produces a prodigious quantity of pinks—I think the finest flower they have.

Digitized by Google

They used to be sold some six or eight years ago at the railway stations, in great profusion.

In our eyes at least, how absurd is the prevailing taste of the continental bouquet, as made up of precise rings of flowers—very formal, and not a leaf left to enhance its beauty; as if the leaves of the flowers were not an essential part of their charm — adding freshness and vigour — often an added perfume, such as the verbena, oak-geranium, &c.! In America, I see they have taken up this tasteless mode of the Continent, and vie in this formality and preposterous dimension. At the *Nice* ball, the ladies' bouquets were quite a load, as if to outdo each other in size alone.

Those thrown on the stage to favourite songstresses are big enough and hard enough to knock them down, and require a wheelbarrow to carry them all off the stage: what mere grown-up spoiled children we all are! And what a flitting shadow is taste — never to be fixed anywhere! The true is instinctive, comes from the soul, and is, as we live, imparted to some minds alone by Nature herself—is fixed, and never can be violated—is impressed at a glance, in a picture, a tone, a statue, a palace, or a nosegay. I cannot imagine dull, tasteless people (not the *oi polloi*) can ever have any great pleasure in anything; but, as a set-off, neither have they ever any sensitiveness, nor much sorrow. They are the great beds of oysters of mankind,—just as it should be;

Digitized by Google

only they give laws and rule in each generation, and truth and nature are scouted or unknown.

We all meet of a Sunday at the chapel, a large room at the consul's, close by, in the Piazza St. Catarina. This street, as I have said, is the great thoroughfare, cutting across under the *Pizzo Falcone*, the *St. Ermo* hill, once prolonged to the Ovo castle and the bay. On the water-side, by the castle at the *Chiatamone*, this rock comes sliced down a hundred yards, at an angle of forty-five degrees, to the street leading along the St. Lucia and *Strada di Giganti* to the palace. Half-way up the *Strada Catarina* there is a noble arch crossing the street, where cut through the hill; on one side of which a public staircase leads to this upper part, the *Pizzo Falcone.*

This *St. Catarina* street is the worst in Naples to keep clear of the carriages, which all scour across by it, whether on pleasure or business, from the Chiaia end (the west end) to the Toledo, the Opera, the Palace, and on, by the Largo di Castello, towards the Mole; thus cutting off the long round by St. Lucia and the water side. But all the streets require to have one's eyes about one. They drive fast; and few have side walks, but are paved quite across by broad flat stones. Nothing is left for foot passengers but to get out of the way—warned or not; sometimes they are forced into doorways to avoid the wheels.

Digitized by Google

This chapel-room at the consul's Palazzo is of noble dimensions, but spoiled by being fitted up with pews! Why would not rush-bottom chairs have done just as well — avoiding all these ugly pews? An unmistakable Irish Rev. Somebody read prayers with a good brogue, and the other young man read a dull, commonplace sermon. There is a very Irish name at the embassy—Fagan. "What's in a name!" The consulate, too, is filled by an Irish name, Galway. I think, taking the patronage of our government as a whole, Ireland and Scotland cannot complain; they fill more than two-thirds of certainly all our smaller official stations, if not the higher too. The singing was remarkably good; a beautiful young creature sitting next me, in mourning, joined, in a most exquisite voice. How irresistible is female beauty, when the charms of a sweet, melodious voice are added! But that my thoughts were bent on high, I could have worshipped her: let me be pardoned the profanation.

It rains in earnest for the first time this month, but not enough to do the gardens much good. The air is very cold, I think more so than at home; nor do the buds, first movement of spring, seem more forward than in our March some vegetables are, but many of them grow through the winter, or at least take their start; such as peas, carrots, radishes, young onions. Whatever there is, is cultivated in the open gardens: they have

Digitized by Google

no hothouses — nothing rare or forced, as with us — unless possibly in the gardens of the rich. There is no Covent Garden, or higher fruiterers. I see them shelling peas in the street; yet one can have none, for none ever appear at the hotels, *tables-d'hôte;* only at restaurants.

By the way, there is but *one* in all Naples considered at all fit to dine at, the *Europa Café,* where men sit dining on one side the same room, in the thick smoke of cigars, while all the crowd are at coffee or ices at the other. Their small tables are covered by a napkin: it looks miserably unlike comfort or *dining.* This one café and restaurant is much too small, is very cold and comfortless; crowded to excess, and everybody proportionably expensively and ill-served.

March draws to a close, with a north wind — though the sun shines, still the weather is very cold;—in short, the weather, as it does with ourselves, and all over the world, depends on the winds—the centre belt of the earth the only exception.

I go to the Museum again to see the right-hand Pompeii room paintings, and to run through the suite of statues on the ground-floor too, entering to the left.

These keepers lock all their gates, and follow each fresh batch of visitors. It is cruel to dodge these ground sharks, who rush open-mouthed after their prey! with one exception, as I have said — the cameo room. But it was not meant surely that we should

Digitized by Google

create this monstrous bore on our minds and pockets; for you are pestered into the bargain—not allowed by this greedy officiousness to contemplate or look at anything properly? As to the expense, I am convinced *now*, that two piastres divided among all these animals would not be thought a bit too much! so that, instead of being an agreeable, easy lounge, it has become an uneasy task and tax.

They look on every foreigner who enters as their lawful prize! and of course feel very sulky—nay, angry (and as if defrauded)—if they get nothing.

What wonders are here! What exquisite things to set one a-thinking!—to admire, to admire more and more!—here, among these faded, spoiled, charred, broken paintings, and stucco bas-reliefs! How masterly the outlines so often are, even when, it is clear, not much pains can have originally been taken! All these paintings and mosaics (in the opposite room) were the walls and floors of private houses, as we know. To particularise would be endless, and indeed absurd; for there is nothing without its own particular interest, not at all essentially in its perfection, often the contrary: some are half done; or done by inferior artists, at so much the yard or the room, as we put paper on our walls. But everywhere one marks the rapidity and ease of these Pompeian painters in fresco; often their excel-

Digitized by Google

lence; everywhere their spirit and fun — their infinite fancy and taste.

Some of the landscapes put one in mind of the Chinese, but superior. Endymion, Diana, Ulysses, Dido, Mars, Venus, Adonis, Hercules' labours, the Centaurs, &c., are favourite episodes; Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, and the Dii Majorum seldom interfere; perhaps as too complicated: marriage feasts and betrothals abound, — that *primum mobile* of all on earth, then as now.

A few beautiful outlined figures on small marble slabs — fruit, flowers, animals — everything in life. They are very correct and happy in their leaves; trees are not attempted, as hiding their subjects; always conversational — telling some story; even in their bordered arabesques; where birds and beasts are perched alternately with fauns, satyrs, and grinning masks.

The marbles are a severer study; for they do indeed approach perfection; nay, are a greater, than we ever witness, alive! More richly, nobly, elegantly dressed, than we moderns ever attempt, or have conceived. Two artists were copying (modelling) the Agrippina reduced, very cleverly: what a settled grief marks her features, her very attitude!

The drapery alone of many of the figures, particularly the females (as in this), is, beyond expression rich and graceful. The folds so infinite, so harmonious, so perfectly true.

Digitized by Google

I think we runners about the Continent say too much of certain things — set up by "connoisseurs" for especial admiration. No doubt these things *are* admirable, but so are thousands of statues and other things never mentioned at all! I must say I think many of the statues and groups here, in art, quite equal to the Hercules and the Farnese Toro (the Dirce), made so much of: the last was *impossible* in marble; as a group it is too much scattered; and the *bull* is too small! or the human figures too large! The dilettanti cry out, "But think of the sublime difficulty!" True, I more wonder than admire: besides, it is only a question of size! It has been justly remarked that marble is improper for rapid action and violence, or rather that violent and sudden actions should never be attempted in sculpture, — in any substance to remain fixed.

Certain it is, all the groups and single statues in a quiescent posture, not only have more truth and dignity, but I think are every way more admirable. I constantly am put in mind of this; each visit the more confirms it; except perhaps in processions, and battles, where the figures follow each other in bands, or produce an agreeable profusion and confusion. This rule ought to hold good of painting. Waterfalls, even Niagara, are the tamest things attempted.

I shall continue my heresies, and confess that much as I admire *the* Apollo and *the* Venus, I prefer many

Digitized by Google

others more,— of youthful manliness, of female beauty: some of the young shepherds and Bacchuses, or Antinous, and the colossal Venus and Cupid here; not to mention many exquisite portraits in sculpture, where great expression adds to their beauty of form, and gracefulness of attitude and drapery. The Medicean Venus has always struck me as affected, with no loveliness of face, however Grecian or regular the features may be — a common property of all ideal statues, even to a sameness that tires; it is absolutely a pleasure to come across the varied features of the portrait statues and busts: in short, a slight irregularity of feature is better, far better, than want of expression!

Going up the Toledo I met the Duke of Northumberland in his carriage, looking very well, very happy. My features must have struck him as familiar (we have indeed spoken), for I expected he would have nodded, he looked so hard at me, and so good-naturedly; his face is the picture of goodness! But our carriages (mine a caricolo or cab at a carlin!) passed and made no sign. I would have taken my hat off; but his presiding year at the Admiralty "sicklied o'er the pale cast of thought, and lost the name of action!"

We are always unlucky in our naval men at the helm; as if they meant to stamp the silly pretence as a truth, that sailors are unfit to be at the head of their own profession as statesmen! and that the naval power

Digitized by Google

of England is much better under the guidance of any other set of men, who *certainly* know nothing about it!

After all we are a people of strange anomalies: they are the breath of our nostrils. We should die of ease, and fun, and plenty, and ennui, if, unhappily, we had more regularity, consistency, justice, and practical good sense to guide the indomitable energies of our little island.

I can talk of nothing but the streets: I see only the *outer* world. It strikes me, with all their avidity, that the Neapolitans, high and low, are an essentially good-natured, witty, funny, laughter-loving people: a little thing sets them at high words, but it is instantly appeased. In this whole month I have not seen a serious quarrel or a blow struck, nor a single drunken man. Never was there a more peaceable, harmless population To rule here should not be difficult.

Yet the whole town is full of barracks and soldiers. Cocked hats and swords meet one at every turn: but they all mix up very lovingly. Nobody is in any trouble or grief that I can see: nobody meddled with. The Government goes on very quietly and popularly, for I believe it is liked by the million; and that, if the million hated anything, it would be a *constitution* heretical!

We are not popular, and we never can be on the Continent. Our religion alone is enough! As to our

Digitized by Google

power, even the middle class know as much of the power of the Chinese. The Government know only enough to dislike us both religiously and politically. One may be certain our ministers abroad do nothing to change this feeling! There is a good household article on our ambassadors in the "Household Words," which puts me in mind of their utility and worth to the nation!

Who can resist the excessive discomfort of a solitary life in a hotel, or in lodgings in Naples? Miserable cold nights and no fire: no refuge but that crowded, smoky, cold café the *Europa*, where I go and take my demi *tazza:* or an ice, but they are afraid of fruit of any kind, and their ices are only of chocolate or vanilla, and their cakes and tarts all sugar and *pasta*—paste indeed!

I dine here badly enough. One half the only room down stairs is filled by men eating ices, sipping coffee, and smoking at the same time. O how I long for some of our own nice, savory, relishing dishes; what would I not give for a curry, or good rump steak and oyster sauce? I had green peas; but there is no such thing as stuffed duck: all their dishes, like the French, are only preeminently insipid: this insipidity has crept round the coast from France of late years. Thirty years ago the Italian dishes were very much better; they have even banished onions and most herbs; sage, parsley, horse-radish, beet-root, not a thing

Digitized by Google

left: mock turtle, mulligatauny, white soup, or any of our seasoned delightful soups are unheard of. So of any dish. Roast beef, or mutton and currant jelly, or boiled turnips, caper sauce, stuffed turkey or goose, any of our homely hashes would be exquisite compared to the messes they set before one; and yet we travelled English do talk such un-English nonsense of Continental cookery! Yes, it is the fashion — so and so has a French cook — gives capital dinners; now, I should say *that* would be the very reason why I would by all means avoid his table, if I cared to eat any dinner at all; still I might hope, in this continental flood of tortured insipidities and affectation which so likes it, that some despised English dish might smoke on the sideboard.

The fish market is poorly supplied here. When a small fried sole appears, their only sauce for it, for oysters, and every thing, is a lemon; so I let fish alone: nor is it of any use asking for tarts or puddings. There are lobsters, poor little things.

The ordinaire wine is good for nothing,—all foreign at very high prices,— far from good even then; lachrymæ Christi at two piastres, and champagne not much less: instead, however, of their own numerous good rich wines as of old, they now affect inferior French wines. Beer of any kind is seldom touched.

They have come to mashed potatoes, but, like the

Digitized by Google

French, though they like them, they are made as insipid as possible, not mashed with butter and milk—but water, and not even salted. Cauliflower is spoiled by their *cheese* over it! Cheese to their soup and maccaroni: at this last solid stuffing they are at least quite at home. An Italian gentleman begins with cramming as much of it down as would fill to the throat past redemption any ordinarily hungry Englishman. No wonder the following "*portions*" in the restaurants and hôtels are so very small! Your miserable pretended beefsteak cuts up into three or four mouthfuls.

In a word, though all this is a very old story and far from new to me, I cannot get used to it, and really sigh for my own fireside, early homely citizen's dinner, and a cup of tea. I see a very fashionable German calls for tea at the *Europa*—such stuff.

I have mentioned the small steamer to *Ischia* and *Procida* twice a week, and to *Capri;* but I shall see nothing of the islands I fear, beyond the distant view on the horizon: the interesting ruins of the first two, and the *blue cavern* of the last may be and are said and sung: I must away to Malta; but have some doubts whether I shall be able to get a bed there, such a deluge of young officers are pouring in at the head of their battalions from England.

I wanted to see a favourite town, at least, in Sicily on my way—*Messina;* but it seems the French steamers

Digitized by Google

must not land passengers any where in this kingdom taken on board here; so I must go by a Neapolitan steamer, if at all.

The passage to Malta is one hundred and twenty francs, and our passport must be viséd at our embassy and next at the police two days before departure; besides that, one should have a temporary passport while remaining in Naples to be rechanged and paid for half a piastre.

Sailing boats start most days about one o'clock, I find, from near the custom-house steps in the harbour (half way along the *Piliero* Strand) over to *Sorento:* a pleasant sail across the bay of two or three hours is better than the longer dusty road, if one has already been on as far as *Pompeii* and *Castelamare.* There is nothing, however, at Sorento but its varied and fine views to repay the trouble.

If with a fair wind, or after a shower free from dust, it would be a pleasure I shall regret when no longer possible: so, too, not to have seen Pæstum. As for getting up and down Vesuvius it is a sheer fatigue and worry, and about as childish as running down *single-tree hill* in Greenwich Park: the crater is reduced to half the size it was thirty years ago, and its smoke hardly perceptible.

To travel by land and sea over Europe and along the borders of Egypt and Asia one should be young and

Digitized by Google

very enthusiastic, otherwise it is most dreary work. The charms which so invite us in distant countries, whose language and ways of thinking and acting are strange, and naturally difficult and disagreeable to us (for we neither understand nor are understood) lie wholly in the *description:* and to be sure how everything on the way is dressed up for us as we lounge, reading, in our arm chairs.

Well, I am now looking at these people, at these things, for the last time; all round these shores the distant views are superb, the sea forming so grand a part everywhere.

Then these mountains capped with snow and this bay will bear looking at every day; yes, nature everywhere delights—never tires; and were it not for the stupid, selfish inventions of man, one might even travel about pleasantly; but of all the modern improvements, and small robberies, and vexations, and tyrannies, commend me to your passport system! and its twin sisters the custom-house and quarantine; one would think these vexatious traps we are ruthlessly driven into were invented on purpose to disgust people, and prohibit their stirring from their own homes!

I have been this whole day trotting and dancing attendance at our ambassadors, the police, and the office of Foreign Affairs; sent backwards and forwards from one trap (where an insolent spider sits watching for

Digitized by Google

his silly flies!) to another; first (nothing was said of not going before to them for leave to remain at Naples) I had to pay one of these scribblers and stampers five carlins two grains (they are wonderfully conscientious about a grain or two: it is not a halfpenny); then, after standing waiting with crowds of others, commissioners &c. from the hôtels, a scrap of scribble is vouchsafed, and you are sent off to another office; then are you told to go next door to the police at four in the afternoon for your passport.

I attend punctually, and am told to come back at six; at last, in another large crowd, my *number* is called, and I am told to pay a piastre, and at last I get the miserable passport. Now what a farce the passport is altogether, as one gets it at our Foreign Office. It is evident our weight and authority abroad is despised, and Lord Clarendon or Lord Palmerston mere nobodys at Naples, his brother "Sir Temple" into the bargain! Everywhere petty consuls are set on to interfere, and at their good pleasure make out one's passport as good for nothing without *their* signature, everywhere as a plea for robbing you of four or five francs; and our own act in strict imitation of this kind solicitude to help us on.

When these vexations are past, one is inclined to laugh at them. Yes, so one does at all troubles and vexations past; but why should we be so vexed, so insolently robbed by the orders and contrivances of

Digitized by Google

governments *we* have kept in existence or allowed to exist at all.

Was it for this that England spent so much blood and treasure (some four or five hundred millions) in our last senseless wars; in which, without us, Spain, Portugal, Sardinia, Rome, Naples, would have been blotted out or would have all changed hands.

I observed to the young man who visés our passports over the stables at the Palazzo *Polycastre* (for secretaries and attachés are never visible to ordinary people) that our ambassador should insist on a more easy footing for Englishmen; but I am convinced not only does our government care nothing about the matter, but that our envoys never make the least effort to smooth anything; they even play into the hands of these petty tyrants, and pretend that it must be submitted to.

Why, a small squadron and five thousand men would in an hour knock these castles about their ears and take the town.

We might have had Sicily over and over; the people would have been too happy to have us: we have been supplicated to release them from bad government and intolerable oppression. Lord P. coquetted with the poor things in 1848–9, then left them to their fate; and what have we got by our squinting forbearance there or here? Hate, insolence, a barely tolerated and utterly useless embassy, no trade whatever worth naming: even

Digitized by Google

the sulphur wrangled about; and finally the name of Englishman held so cheap as to invite discourteousness from officials, insolence, and petty vexation.

To be respected it would be well to be called *American;* it is evident they are more feared, if not more liked, than ourselves. I observed when their officers come on shore every respect paid them, no custom-house, no petty forms on landing. This may be in common to all nations in uniform on service. But there can be no doubt that we are on the whole neither liked nor feared all round these shores: we put up with it simply because it does not reach our people in power; anything is excused and complied with under the mask of an affected moderation; but we can and do interfere and even threaten occasionally in behalf of a private individual's supposed wrong in a money transaction, and that man not at all an Englishman (I allude to the Greek Jew some years back at Athens), or about such wanton meddling as Miss Cunningham's in Tuscany.

In a word, England's best interests at home and abroad are betrayed, for their own idle selfish purposes, by her leading people, who in turn are politically hated and despised for their pains.

But let me turn to a more grateful theme; for people will still live and multiply through all sorts of misgovernment.

It is certain there is no longer any class called laza-

Digitized by Google

roni here, — the very poor swarm; but it requires to be completely without any sort of trade or calling to be a lazaroni, — a vagabond; but not exactly a beggar. There may be still a few: they clean shoes, hold horses, run about with flowers, hang on a little as occasional porters or messengers about the hotels and wharfs, offices, and public places: but after all, as a body, they no longer exist; nor is there anything in the dress or manner of the crowd to distinguish it from the same thing all round the coast from Marseilles: here, indeed, they are identically the same: the very tone of voice in their street cries — or driving their goats about the streets.

The same customs and ways and the language itself vary very little, — the same kind of mixed jargon, — Spanish, French, and Italian: so that here at Naples, they after all differ very little from the habits and ways of the southern French towns. Many of the shops are French, and their signs written in French. In the upper world, nothing is at all English, except in their very young men *about town*, who dress, and ride, and drive in as close an imitation of our style as possible: so, too, they study our language a good deal; many read it.

At the Europa, poor *Galignani* is torn to pieces from hand to hand; indeed it is the only print they can catch the least glimmer from of what is going on in the world; all local politics are of course strictly

Digitized by Google

forbidden. If there is no other, there seems an apparent good natural freedom in all that meets the eye; a give and take good nature; much loud talk and gesticulation, as if very interesting. I wish I could understand it enough, to find it quite as dull and commonplace as at home! Not to understand people raises them wonderfully in the mind's eye!

Altogether, I long to get away from discomfort and annihilation! so I take a boat to look at two new screw steamers just built in England (the Amalfi and Sorento), and sent here to add to their stock. They are poor cribs; we ought to be ashamed of them, if the Italians are not. The *Sorento* had been across the bay, with the King on board, and came rolling in, passing close to us: though the water was too smooth to make anything *roll*, not thoroughly defective in construction! A precious contrast this to the *Saranac* American war-steamer, laying now close off the mole. She towed in the Cumberland frigate (one of their old ones, small rather for American, and ugly). It appears steamers are the king's hobby as well as his army, and that he has really some fifteen afloat; not fifty or sixty, as the Sardinian minister said the other day: though I see only six in the arsenal harbour, all of them looking pretty well; but of no strength or force as men-of-war, and none screw.

As we rowed round the pier head, an aquatic police,

Digitized by Google

jack-in-office, hailed my boatman, and forbade his taking me out, without a permit! We begged his Dogberry worship not to exert his high authority, as I was only going a few yards outside (how avoid writing *his king* down an ass!) to return immediately. Among the packet steamers lying at the end of the mole, I noticed the *Parthenope,* a small miserable screw, one of two running to Messina; it calls going along at *Paulo,* and at Pizzo in Calabria: the passage seven piastres. The King and Court are at Caserta, so I shall see nothing of either one or the other.

I was just too late to see him go on board the *Sorento* this morning, when they went round the bay on this trial trip. This would argue some activity in his majesty, and some interest in nautical matters. It confirms what is said of his anxiety to possess a good many war steamers. I observed all the sailing sloops-of-war lying in the Royal Harbour outside the Mole are *barques.* The steam-sloops or frigates, paddle-wheel; none as yet screw; nor is this specimen of a packet we have sent him very encouraging:—but our iron steamers are constantly built on a wrong model,—with no beam, no bearings, no stiff stability,—sharp up and down at the bows above the water line, and, like our men-of-war, all drawing too much water, from this pervading sin of narrowness (a want of flatness of floor in

Digitized by Google

the middle section well carried out), whereby they are invariably too much *under* water, and too little *above* it. Still our *engines* are the best in the world, and becoming more perfect every day by spirited experiments and new inventions. The engines of the *Sorento* were on the oscillating principle, the crank playing directly on the shaft. On board the *Sorento* there was an English engineer, a jolly good-natured young man. He, very obligingly, pointed out this new variety of engine to me.

Generally speaking, all the Mediterranean steamers have English engineers, who seem to get on very well under their foreign employers.

It would seem as if there was something either too wearing, or too incessant, or too hard in such a life; making it still a difficult matter to do without our English engineers and stokers, all round the coast, whether French, Sardinian, Neapolitan, Austrian, Egyptian or Turkish. Even the Russians depend still on us. Some few came away from the Baltic and Black Sea at the declaration of war; but, no doubt, they will retain all they possibly can.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. V.

LEAVE NAPLES IN THE SCREW "SORENTO." — COAST OF CALABRIA. — PAULO. — PIZZO. — BAND ON BOARD. — DEATH OF MURAT. — LIPARI ISLES. — STROMBOLI. — SICILY. — MESSINA. — INDUSTRY. — — POVERTY. — TYRANNY. — TWO HOTELS. — MARINA. — BEAUTIFUL SITE OF CITY. — REGGIO OPPOSITE. — THEATRE. — RUINS OF EARTHQUAKES, AND BURNT HOUSES. — SOLDIERS. — POLICE. — PASSPORTS. — GOOD GLOVES AND BAD LIVING. — CYCLE OF THE PORT AND CITADEL. — HACK CABS. — FISH MARKET. — WOMEN. — WEAVING. — TRADE. — TAORMINA. — GIARDINA. — CHAIN BARRIERS. — CACTI. — ETNA APPEARS. — ACI-REALE. — CATANIA. — CORONNA D'ORO. — PLACIDO. — GREEK THERME. — BISCARI'S. — LAVA. — SPERONAROS. — SCARCITY. — PADRE GUARDO.

On the whole the weather has been fine, though for spring very cold; some few days raw, rainy, and disagreeable enough. Frequent high winds, — now the end of March.

It turns out that this same *Sorento* steamer is the one to start to-day; and to-day I have fixed on to be off, after a whole month's vegetating ennui. It changes to stormy and rainy; but luckily blowing off the land, north-east. At the steam office I ask particularly (as they take one's passport) if I can now go on board without any further interference from police or custom-house officers at the

Digitized by Google

landing place. They solemnly assure me I can; when I drive up at two o'clock (for they insist on the passengers being on board not a moment later); and a dozen boatmen rush on my baggage, squabbling who shall have me—up steps one of these custom-house sharks, and significantly asks if I hav'n't something liable to a duty! I wave him off, but he stops everything; even these boatmen recoil. I must go to the office! Why so? He holds out his hand—"a bottiglia!" I put a carlino in his claw, and he kindly withdraws his veto; and now comes the tug—I get my things into the boat—forthwith one of these salt-water animals wants to know what my *excellenza* gives? but at once says, putting me on board is to be *six carlini*, the fare should be but one. They wont budge; it rains; but as this roused my ire, I insist on putting my things once more on the steps.

After an immense uproar, the fiercest stickler (for they work in pairs) jumps out; and another, his partner, gets hold of his oars.

Now, the distance is but a hundred yards; it is really much worse than our fellows wanting a shilling, or one shilling and sixpence, to or from the Tower Stairs. At last I get on board, and give the waterman two carlini; but am fain to add another half, to spare a torrent of words,—then he kisses my hand.

By the way my porter's wife, as I left my lodgings,

Digitized by Google

on giving her four carlini, would seize my hand and kiss it.

The deck of the *Sorento* is crowded. The king, when on board on Monday, went down in the engine-room to see the engine (on a new and very simple construction, the piston horizontal, working immediately by a crank on the shaft). This is her first trip to Messina.

Among our fellow passengers were many officers of the 12th, and their band. Our two o'clock turns out four o'clock. The weather still stormy with rain; so that we are forced down in the cabin, till almost opposite *Sorento*, across the bay.

As night closes in, we pass between the point of Salerno and Capri, opening the Gulf of Salerno, which is pretty deep; we have some little sea: altogether, our *Sorento* behaves pretty well; and her sails keep her steady: the shaft makes a good clatter at the stern; the more perhaps, that the screw is a foot or two out of the water. She is slow, too, partly from the same reason; going not above seven or eight miles an hour. We see the southern cape of the gulf, and steer wide of it, to avoid certain rocks about two miles off its shore.

During the night, after a very tolerable dinner, with only just motion enough to make a few sea-sick, we carry away the fore-topmast in a squall. The captain, a good looking young fellow, would carry on

Digitized by Google

through it; and told us next morning, it was as well to get rid of it thus, by way of forcing the owners to get a stronger one.

All this shore is bold, steep too, with the crests of its highest summits white with snow. The lights and shadows of the ridges and ravines form the great beauties of all mountain scenery. Their very sterility adds to the fine effect. All the way down Calabria, at all near the sea on the slopes, is dotted with houses and villages; some hanging on precipitous bluffs over the sea; sometimes on the steep face of the mountains. The lower ranges next the sea tinged with green crops here and there; but few or no trees anywhere. Their forests must range in the interior.

We call at *Paulo* (St. Francisco de Paulo), a small town and garrison: here the band came on board, and played several airs from *Verdi's Trovatore;* which, thus cut off from the tedious whole of the opera, I thought fine, so, must retract some of my criticism.

We keep close along the shore, crossing a still deeper gulf or bay to *Pizzo*, a larger town on the steep side of its rocky abrupt hills. Here there is more verdure, and a few olive orchards. Here *Murat* put on shore on a festive day, having lost his ships: he tried to raise the peasantry — was coldly received. Suspecting treachery, he fled with his few followers down the hill, and tried to regain his boats; they had left the shore, and

Digitized by Google

would not put back; whether by *accident* it does not appear; a party of the militia or police pursued and took him; he foolishly wearing rich jewels and other signs of his rank, which they tore from his person! This at the very town he had especially befriended as king.— O blind ingratitude!

His body lies buried in the town to this day, near where he was shot; holding in his hand the miniatures of his wife and children! Forty years have made us more just, to the dead at least! He was a great benefactor to the two Sicilies, in laws, in improvements of every kind; and what has been gained by this sanguinary ungrateful act!

Not only this, but how all our ideas and policy have changed; nay, of right and wrong; but mankind are surely consistent in nothing but inconsistency! Nothing irritates me more than the mouthing of political moralists and the public papers on international laws and the *principles* of States—both as changeable as the wind —according to the time and place, and the "eternal fitness of things," as Philosopher Square has it.

Our passage is very pleasant, but slow; the deck is crowded by poor boys, striplings, recruits for the army, in every shade of Calabrian and Neapolitan dress; many barefooted, their clothes very poor, but carefully patched, with their peaked felt hats, and some attempts at ornament; each clutching a bit of bread; and so a few

Digitized by Google

mouthfuls, and to sleep all over the deck in the sun; where, huddled closely packed, they remain all night.

Some of our passengers going on shore at Pizzo, I observe their servants or tenants, working people, who come off in the boats to meet them, seize their hands and kiss them fervently if suffered. Poor things! they are content and happy with very little.

There is a good deal of familiarity between the high and low — masters and servants — but occasionally also much harshness and little ceremony.

One stout fellow, a master of some of the boats which came off with packages, and to take three horses on shore, kicked and cuffed the boatmen unmercifully, and without the least show of resentment on their parts.

We now see *Stromboli* and other of the Lipari Islands. The weather is finer, and before night we see Sicily in the extreme distance; at dark, the Faro or light-house of Messina, and pass the once horrid Scylla and Charybdis and so into the port about nine at night: —twenty-nine hours' passage. Anchoring in the inner harbour, within the citadel, which narrows its entrance, the lights along the front of the town forming a long cheerful line; but we are to remain on board; as, after sunset, *pratique* is not given, even from Naples, and this is called a free port! Here, too, our passports are to be viséd, and are just as if nothing had been done at Naples, or this were a foreign city.

Digitized by Google

A bright, joyous, beautiful morning, giving the lights and shadows of these hills behind the town, and the higher mountains clothed with snow across the strait:—a delicious effect. But Messina is not only admirably situated, it is a cheerful looking town; its range of houses along its harbour face for two miles (the *Marina*), shine warmly out. A good many small vessels are at its quays, but the variety and richness of land and sea, the towns opposite of *St. Giovanni* and *Reggio* farther south—the long tongue of land, village, and Faro north; distant Italy, blue beyond; convents, churches, forts, on the hill sides; hanging gardens, terraces, and towers near the eye,—altogether produce that peculiar delight, only such things can give one—before one descends to the vulgar miseries of stewards, boatmen, custom-houses, and passports.

Our treatment on board was liberal, and the cabin servants content with half a piastre. The boatmen were forced to be quiet with four carlini, and the fellow who shouldered my baggage after a tremendous noise as to who would or should get it, in a crowd of idlers on the quay, modestly accepted four more car-

(near two francs), for his trouble. My passport meantime is to be sent to the police by the captain, and our names called over for the second time; like so many felons going to jail; I am given a bit of paper, a

Digitized by Google

sort of ticket, to enable me to recover it at the police office "within twenty-four hours."

The next difficulty was as to hotels — only two passable — the *Victoria* and *Villa Nuova;* not a room to be had at either, nor in three others I went to — all full. Too glad at last, after a round of hunting through the streets, to share a room with a fellow-traveller at the *Villa Nuova;* both are on the quay near the landing; the entrance to them on the *Strada Ferdinando;* a handsome street running parallel to the harbour, behind the first range of houses.

I think our last impression of this city and this beautiful country is mixed up with the miserable massacres of 1849 — the burnings and the cruelties! Messina is now a free port, and they are building a wall round it, to take care that the country without shall not benefit by it; if, indeed, any trade finds its way here by some rare accident.

What, however, does a free port mean? Both here and at Genoa they have an immense avidity at search for *contraband* something. What! poor travellers' trunks are tumbled about, but not a ship in port! What little trade there is, is a small coasting one, in grain, wine, and oil amongst themselves. Not a vessel to Malta — not an English flag here.

Our *treaty* with the Two Sicilies provides that the English, for having given them the island, held it for

Digitized by Google

them, as well as preserving and retaking the kingdom altogether, shall have all the *advantages* of their own subjects; who have none whatever!

In a word, *we* have contrived to load ourselves with every species of vexation and insolence of *passports* and *custom-houses.* No exchange with us of anything,—an ill-concealed hatred speaks the thanks for our *fleet,* and our expensive mistaken measures early in this century!—all this might be altered by a stroke of the pen.

This precious treaty expires, I understand, next year. Shall we have any wiser statesmen for foreign affairs? This island, as they have always so much wished, nay supplicated, might have been ours over and over again.* To mouth about the *rights* of nations is mere hypocrisy; we have been dared and insulted!—what was to prevent us, when it was the choice, the ardent wish, of these islanders. What a farce is all the justice and moderation of nations towards each other!

But to poor Messina; its inner harbour and the sea face is awed by a strong citadel and forts *à fleur d'eau* all round. The rest of the town is equally commanded by hill forts behind it, at every point.

It is quite a government of soldiery and police—yet

* Witness the pleasant way the United States has seized on all our north bank of the *Columbia* up to the 49th parallel! and the slice as insolently clipped from us, from the true boundary in Nova Scotia!—the wisdom of *giving it up* is not the question.

Digitized by Google

does its population increase in spite of all these obstacles: it has now a hundred thousand souls; fifty years ago it had not half that number.

One sees a great many houses in ruins, said to have been burned; but it has always been a town of ruins! The Marina or strand face houses, are roofed in, half built—columns and all, just as of old; handsome designs and parts only finished, meet one everywhere. No plan carried out; some, perhaps, from the fear of an earthquake, which once nearly destroyed it entirely—other causes, sheer poverty, prevent many from repairing or finishing. They rent the ground floor, or live in it, and cover in with a temporary roof below the second floor, or the house is deserted *in toto;* so of some of the churches: yet, spite of all this, Messina has three or four fine streets and some noble buildings.

The Corso, above and parallel to the San Fernando, the *Strada del Porta de Catania* and *Strada Austria.*

The theatre is very handsome, and the town-hall a noble building. The hills come down close behind into the poorer suburbs, where old forts and enormous walls of castles and inclosures still mark their once tyrant purposes.

Making my way up the narrower, poorer streets above the *Strada dei Monasteri* (composed of monastic palaces), I observe one of the general employments of the poor women is weaving linen: almost in every

Digitized by Google

house of one or two rooms, there was a small simple loom. Little girls of eight or nine were weaving *tape* at the doors in the street, with an odd primitive little loom (suspended), others everywhere spinning with the distaff. Some men were making rope by the roadside.

They say, there is no particular thing manufactured at Messina — I should say, at any rate, flax is, into linen of some sort. Their boots and shoes are good and very cheap, as are their gloves,— better than at Naples. I am particularly struck by their lively, cheerful industry; and, as every where on the Continent, poor things, they are content with very little indeed.

There is not a beggar in the town. I inquired and find the town council have sent them all to the *poor*-house; how admirable! a good lesson for us at home, and the only way we shall ever get rid of those pests— street beggars by trade. The moment a person begs, send him off to an asylum; it soon winnows the chaff off; and what a benefit and blessing it would be in London, where it is tolerated to our infinite annoyance, and under the noses of our police, who bring a few now and then by way of sample to present to their worships, the magistrates!

There is no market place, and the butchers look very poor and dirty. However, there is a good supply of fish, and cheap,—so of butter and milk,—and the bread is excellent; but the hotels keep, as usual, wretched

Digitized by Google

tables; — the *Villa Nuova* charging higher than the *Vittoria* next door; for worse breakfasts and dinners; but were these places ten times as bad, there is simply Hobson's choice, and they know it. In Italy, by the way, they add a porter to the tribe of expectants, who always wish you a bon voyage! though you may not even have seen him before your exit.

In Sicily, the towns are a strange mixture of palaces, ruins, and empty houses, without windows or floors. One wonders who they belong to, — if the owner is dead, or ruined or banished! or what sort of succession there is to property. This holds good in the best streets — in the heart of the place, as well as in the suburbs, particularly here; added to this, old walls and forts, in every direction, partly pulled down or tumbling down.

To the west of the town, is an extensive flat, cultivated as kitchen gardens, olive and fig orchards, lemon and orange; but not a house or place repairing, except the fort wall at the end of the Esplanade, next the sea; where the sentinels wont allow you to pass to the beach through the open gate-way, but send you round a mule track farther on, among the gardens. Sentinels seem posted everywhere, to take care of nothing. In this way one can hardly walk in any direction, without popping on these poor paid tools of tyranny, in this go-ahead age — the year 1854. But what *is* this same

Digitized by Google

tyranny? it is not here alone in Italy (where the tyrant is said to be a very good sort of man); it ranges over the whole earth, just as it did a hundred or a thousand years ago; it is not in this man or that, who is called King or Emperor or Chief. It is in that animal Man, who will tyrannise in some shape or other while he lives.

Tyrant kings are hedged round by a flock or the flower, of the nation, who flatter and applaud him or her, in pure senseless selfishness, to exalt themselves.

Are *we* free from this rank folly, ingratitude and injustice—this suicidal process against the vigour and life of the nation at large? Not a bit of it—only we call it *law:* very silly bad laws must be obeyed, and they, by a pleasant fiction, are called the Queen and Government. A host of the flower of our land perpetuate these laws, and form a barrier round the throne, sacred to selfishness and haughty silence! Where the tyranny touches us proudly free citizens, it comes in the shape of a lawyer and tax-gatherer! A comparatively new country, the United States, our brother Jonathan, has set up the selfsame tyrants. In a word, it is your highly civilised society preying on each other; but it is nonsense talking of particular tyrants nowadays. It is really only a question of what sort of tyranny is most tolerable.

We cannot fly from ourselves — from our detestable civilised double-faced natures: we ransack the whole

Digitized by Google

earth, and insist on poor, naked, comparatively innocent savages in further ocean, adopting our vices, our miseries, and our refinements. They must change their ideas of God's good, or we kill them; a pretext is never wanting. Read the history of the world, even for these last fifty years! up to, and to-day, when this virtuous world are aghast at the tyrant Nicholas! only there is a monstrous difference of opinion, and there is no end to *notes* and the contradictory reasonings of statesmen, all professing the "*highest consideration*" and "*profound respect*" for their tyrants and for each other. They can't agree,—so their tools march, armed in the most refined manner with the minié-musket.

In an evil moment I join an Italian party in a carriage (a *vetturino*, and three poor lean horses) for Catania —and we start from the *Vittoria* at eight A.M., sun very hot and road very dusty—the distant view of the coast-hills and *Calabria* opposite — the straits, and shipping beating up against an east wind, one's only visible consolation. The journey excessively uncomfortable, and the three *Italians* chattering away nothings I couldn't join in; but pestered every now and then by the bad English of a selfish fat man — a lawyer of Bologna not to enlighten me, but to show off his acquirement — rendering confusion worse confounded; he talked in bad French and English and Italian incessantly; making it a rule not to listen, or help my Italian out. These

Digitized by Google

are a kind of Italian *bagmen*, vulgar and vastly self-sufficient.

We breakfast on the road at a wretched *locanda*, on macearoni and boiled mutton, (or goat rather) — and so on to *Taormina*. The country hills and mountains on our right, more and more grand and picturesque; the sea, and Calabrian mountains on the other side of the straits on our left hand.

Nothing can well exceed this grandeur and variety of shape; hill piled on hill up to *Mola* above, as we turn the castle point, where rocks close in the cove or bay at *Taormina:* below us, farther on, lies the village of *Giardina;* here, though already on a high cliff over the sea, we turn off zigzag up the steep ascent to the ruins of the antique Greek theatre.

This ascent alone occupied half our time: at the picturesque town, where there are two monasteries in full activity, or rather sloth, where every house has marks of the Saracenic or mediæval ages — often very rich — though all in ruins more or less — we get down and walk up to the *antiquary's* shop, who shows the theatre, and has a kind of *studio* filled with bits of antique marbles — the ornaments broken from the once columns, &c.; and his own plans and drawings of the thing itself, as it now appears — but so-so; of the country round, as seen from the theatre,— but it is much too vast, and too grand for his feeble pencil.

Digitized by Google

Here we undergo the usual tedious details and explanations; made more intolerable by the silly questions of the very clever bagman lawyer. The children of the town followed us up, and a swarm of beggars; from the former I got half a dozen coins — hap hazard — I fear some will turn out mere *Tornesi*, but I put in my pocket a bit of brick and mortar — undoubtedly antique! and a little flower of this spring! What is time? — ages as a minute! could we but trace these mountains before the Greeks, or the Phœnicians — when they too had their ruins of ages lost in the mists of time!

Who would believe that, spite of the numbers of travellers who are constantly coming here to see it, and spend their money — yet not a person at *Taormina*, the village on this mountain, has dreamt of setting up a *locanda!* So we must unwillingly descend from this grand height to the wretched village of *Giardina*, on the beach, where there are two or three miserable *locandas*, not a whit improved since the days of *Brydone* — except in cheating.

The landlord had three little stale fish for five of us — not a vegetable, not even an egg! no flesh of any sort, a little bread and wine. He stood us out as to the freshness of his fish, despite our nostrils; luckily a fishing-boat came in, and we got some whiting — one of our

Digitized by Google

party ran to the boat and bought the fish; for which he made us pay much more twice over, by way of revenge. His bill was extra impudently exorbitant; our beds, narrow little iron things, occupied the corners in the only room. By good luck they were clean, however. The smallest comfort of this kind, a clean bed, becomes quite inestimable.

This is a stout village of sturdy beggars in general, and time out of mind in particular, have these very inns been fleecing travellers; strictly from father to son. An English party, just before us, had stopped at the *Britannia*, a still smaller place, at the entrance of the town — they got one room, double-bedded; none have any sitting-room: but they were wiser than ourselves, bringing their own *meat*, bread, wine, &c. with them.

Milk is here out of the question — still less is butter heard of, when once you pass Messina. But this *Giardina* seems pre-eminently poor, the landlords of the two or three cheating taverns excepted. The half-starved mob must gnaw at the fleshy cactus — indeed, its fruit is much eaten by the peasantry: it is not yet in blossom. This spring is as unusually backward as the winter has been severe.

Next morning we are off after paying our bill, and an Italian chaffing with mine host of the wretched *Vittoria Locanda*. The weather is delightful — the

Digitized by Google

sun already very powerful, and the dust of the road pretty troublesome. The cultivation, wherever possible, everywhere round the shores of the Mediterranean, is very industrious and careful. The olive trees are larger and more frequent than at Messina, where they are more scarce. By the by, the oil is everywhere bad.

The spring wheat enlivens the level vineyards and terraces, where they are hoeing, and ploughing with three oxen very cleverly and well; beans and peas often skirt the way, and latterly the bright green of the almond tree increases the beauty of the landscape; for the fig, the mulberry, and other trees, are as yet quite bare — the vine just sprouting.

This is a charming season, but for the delicacies of fruit and vegetables, the worst, as nothing is ripe — oranges, the only fruit one sees; a few dried figs, no raisins anywhere: of course no grapes. Not to be half-starved, one must acquire the Italian taste. Maccaroni and bread and wine, — they cannot even make a decent salad; and every dish is a strict insipidity. Their "*dolces*" are mere bon bons, and stale sweet biscuits.

We have passed about a dozen barrier chains across the road, to pay duty and toll; and as many *custom-houses*, mere cabins, where they stopped us — holding out

Digitized by Google

their hands, these dirty pleasant officers, for their fee — knowing well enough we can have nothing contraband: a carlin or two satisfied each set — but unless paid, they would have *stopped* us, and searched each trunk and carpet bag! Can one conceive such a country! a country without trade — and only infested by these government robbers, planted at intervals on the road-side to exact in this way!

As we approach Catania the country grows richer and richer; and yet how wretched the villages and the people! Poor things, lean, stunted; the women everywhere spinning flax at their distaffs; many of the fields were in flax, now in flower.

We breakfast, after going to half a dozen cafés and locandas in vain — at the large town of *Aci-reale;* the nearest point to the summit of Etna; which, with its noble mantle of snow, we have had in sight on our right, since leaving Taormina. We are now in a country of lava; vast streams often intersect the road, in wild desolation; beautiful in its rugged variety, when most desolate — when not too recent, giving vigour to gardens and wildernesses of the cactus, which grows to a gigantic size; the fruit is the prickly pear of tropical climates — and a blessing on this track.

Near Messina the cactus lines the roads and gardens as hedges; but as we come on, the rocky hills are often covered with it in great luxuriance, where nothing else

Digitized by Google

will grow. It seems the first pioneer among the deserts of lava!

Within two or three miles of Catania, we pass the last river of lava, sent down in 1852! A rugged band of scoriæ, black, rugged, desolate, as yet too recent for the slightest vegetation, even of the cactus; this mass of desolation poured across the fields, crossed the road, nor stopped till in the sea, forming a small sort of port, where lay a fishing-boat or two, and where we fee our last custom-house brigand; but not the last,—no—they beset every road in Sicily. Nothing can be well more melancholy than to see a whole country so naturally fruitful, so rich in all the good gifts of nature, with its people so utterly poor, so ragged, so dirty, so seemingly ill-fed and miserable. The very words trade, commerce, enterprise, are unknown, or a mere mockery, if ever uttered; and yet are these harpies let loose on them.

Nothing loth, we drive into *Catania*, which is, after *Aci*, the nearest city from the summit of Etna, situate on a thirty-miles-long ascent or ridge of lava, formed no doubt by eruptions beyond all history!

One wonders, indeed, how the lava could have possibly found its way here near forty miles! On one more recent eruption, taking the longest bend too, across the west end of the town, where one still sees it in its pristine wild desolation, amid ruins of all sorts;

Digitized by Google

garden walls, and those of the town; churches, villas, streets; to say nothing of its successive beds at the port, and the lowest ground yet found, one sees a small stream creeping along the floor of the Greek Thermæ, forty or fifty feet below the present level; in the same way in the higher parts of the city at the Greek Theatre, and the more recently excavated Roman Amphitheatre, of which a small part only has been brought to light.

But even antiquities tire one at last, particularly underground, in dirt, mud, water, and the smoke of torches. Everybody goes to the *Coronna d'Oro Hotel* in the great street, the Corso; running to the west, where for thirty-two years they have been *taking in* the English; where there is a manuscript book six inches thick, filled with all sorts of foolish scribble; and duly signed; all agreeing as to its excellence, and the exceeding *kindness* of the padrone *Abbate;* who, having died one day lately, has left his inconsolable widow to carry on, assisted by a son-in-law or two, very great men, who say "*lei,*" dropping the "*signor*"—and third person—for why? Are they not millionaires!

I read over part of this book with most especial wonder; it set me to thinking how insipid are praises of this kind, so *very* little deserved! All so very "*comfortable,*" so very "*grateful,*" and such "*kindness!*" Now, do we ever talk of a landlord's kindness at home!

Digitized by Google

though treated ten times as well? and with every luxury, every delicacy, very often; and proportionably paying not more than here: for we always forget that this is an *excessively* cheap country; where a *dollar* will certainly obtain more of anything in the market than a guinea at home, with very few exceptions. One may thence judge of the greediness of all the continental hotel keepers; which increases, I think, as we come south in Italy,—owing partly to ourselves:—we seem to insist on paying for everything extravagantly, as one sign of gentility!

My Italian travelling friends ordered dinner at six carlini each. We had a little fried whiting, two tough fowls, half a dozen small bad potatoes, and a dish of very poor greens (*called brocoli*), *and* an orange a piece. Now, what inn at home would not have given us a much better, more handsome dinner,—I say nothing of our excellent vegetables, reckoned as nothing,—for three shillings a head? no sauce, no pickles, no relish of any kind, except *lemon,* which is the eternal seasoning and sauce for fish, flesh, and fowl in Italy!

It is something however to sit in this fine lofty saloon; I like it. And there is under the painted ceiling a worn-out piano; at which our signora sang us an aria or two, after our most wretched dinner,—wretched to me,—to the Italian taste not so very bad; for they only live in this way; nay, maccaroni alone is a dinner!

Digitized by Google

The meal despatched, when all is over, one may forget the whole thing. Nature at least is satisfied: but I envy the meals of my servants at home; and long to have my breakfast and dinner once more, after a continental fast of six months!

But I was going to say, these people have no butter for breakfast, and hardly milk enough for four of us! They ignore English *tastes* and mode of living, after thirty years' experience, and a large fortune got out of us: of course as wholly unnecessary after such a constant torrent of eulogium in this folio! Whose book have I read, throwing a kind of charm over this part of the island; and making one long to tread the streets of Catania, as the most pleasant town in all Sicily; from its rich surrounding country, from its simple, hospitable inhabitants; where they run after an Englishman, and kindly press forward to show him all sorts of attention?

This must mean where you have letters of introduction, or Catania is strangely altered; but in fact we have, as utter strangers, no right to expect anything beyond that one thing we take refuge in — which is watching for us! — the inevitable hotel, where you are everywhere driven to on the Continent. But here at the *Golden Crown*, after thirty-years-long eulogistic scribble, insipid as the dishes served up to us! — it is really too much and too rich!

Digitized by Google

People's opinions of this or that I find for ever misleading: there is nothing for it but to stick to facts, dull facts of the day.

And yet there is a charm in the very name of Sicily; its ruins, ancient and modern, — its Etna — its torrents of lava; which have so often destroyed, wholly, or in part, this very town. Its grapes, its vines, its plenty— most of all these pen-and-ink phantoms on paper. Not to destroy at one fell swoop half one's loved ideas of the romance, let us stay at home and read about it. Well, no: one comes, and must for ever admire this grandeur of nature and, in times long past, of art; for the solidity and richness of the architecture, dating back three to five hundred years, are still admirable; but what a miserable set are its present possessors!

What ignorant meanness in the upper orders! what wretchedness in the lower! what absurd superstition everywhere! how many centuries behind half the world! their shops, their dress, their ways — their everything. Yet are the Italians of the upper class a smiling witty set — fond of play and fun; but so very far from our ideas of things in general, that it is a question whether any other sort of government, beyond that of menials and children, would suit them; cunning not wisdom, superstition not piety, rules their minds, and so down to the common and most importunate street beggar.

Digitized by Google

How can we ever be properly estimated in the south of the Continent, until we turn Roman Catholics; speak the language of the people, grow Italian, get out of our own peculiar ideas! No; we are English and *heretics*, and foredoomed.

We blink this part of the matter; but it is the most powerful cause why so few of our modern improvements ever gain ground here. It is a mistake to think they either like us or respect us,— from that last sole cause; when they don't quite shudder at the bare sight of us.

Our cash makes us tolerated at the hotels, where alone we are known as existing at all, and as a strange set of fools, from a cold island somewhere about Nova Zembla. When Italians travel to us, they are forced to say nothing about us; to write the truth, even if they could feel it, is impossible: their own vanity and customs overlaying anything they may see in Piccadilly, Regent Street, or the Parks, or over the face of our Island.

Thus, they know as little on their return as when they set out, and care less; only they will be very exaggerated and diffuse on our *rain* and London *smoke*, and our want of *maccaroni*, and insipid *minestras*; mere steam or steam boats, and railways, are no longer a novelty anywhere.

But to Catania. There are several good streets — the

Digitized by Google

Strada di Etna, or the "*Stericorea*" looking up to Etna, which crosses the *Corso* at the *Piazza du Duomo*, is *the* street: some noble churches and palaces, and parts of both left off in the middle; and so grown old as if forgotten! This kind of richness in ruins is very remarkable here; dirty squalid families and their rags hanging about marble caryatides, exquisite pilasters, marble foliage, columns, balconies, and doors and windows; the richest tracery or marble columns decorating a huckster's shop, and bad cheese piled against torsi or inestimable fragments of sculptured marble we would give our ears to possess in Belgravia; beside which, how vulgar, how flimsy, how flat, our attempts at the *florid* or ornament of any kind!

Well, to things stirring. As we recede from Naples so do we see fewer and fewer private carriages: there are, as at Messina, a few hacks and cabs (four wheels) on the square above the Duomo at the Town Hall; but well-dressed people fall off; a few small cafés contain the few young men *about town* — a very green set, dressed in strange trowsers and attempts at our or rather the French last fashions.

The ladies wear black silk scarfs or cloaks in the old Spanish mode. Extremely few women are ever seen in the streets, where there seems only a population of men; a sort of café was shown me quite empty,—the

Digitized by Google

Stanzi dei Nobili — where alone the nobility can enter. The Italians have no clubs in our sense.

The universal dinner hour seems one o'clock; all the shops are shut then for an hour or two, and business, what little there may be, ceases; you can dine nowhere out of your hotel; which may account for the bad fare there. The *Tratorias* are dirty holes, meant for poor bachelors or strangers to the town; even such eating houses are difficult to be found; their cafés, as at Naples and Messina, are poor little shops; only *one* at all frequented; here it is the "*Sicilia*," on the Duomo Square.

An arched portal (a ruin) leads out of this square on the little harbour; within the pier are a few *speronari;* and without, half a dozen brigs: some few boats are building on the wharves beyond the custom-house.

From two or three low arches on this *Marina* (water-side), one sees a lively clear stream of fresh water issue, bathing the feet of the usual congregation of industrious dirty washerwomen: this little subterranean river passes under the various beds of lava on which the city is built, and is the greatest modern blessing they possess, though they have an aqueduct, and a few fountains, supplied from the same source in that belt of verdure of the country which begins immediately at the outskirts of the town, and forms the first ten or twelve miles of agricultural fertility at Etna's feet; whose summit seems quite close at the further end of the street, and from

Digitized by Google

the waterside! — but as I advanced two miles to its upper end, thinking to ascend the fertile belt, I found the mountain seemed to have vanished, — I could hardly see his snow-capped head! however, from a semicircular platform at this upper end of the Strada d'Etna (the last half a very poor suburb), one gets some idea of the whereabouts, not only of Etna, but of the whole city, on its gentle slope to the sea.

All their torrents of lava, and oft-repeated destroyings, seem lost in the last great eruption of near two hundred years ago; coming twelve miles off from the Monte Rosa (a "wart on Ossa"), from the flanks of Etna, it broke into the west end of the town, filled up the bay, and formed a kind of promontory, which is now as bare, as savage, and almost as recent in appearance as on the first day.

A few small walls of its own froth and scum have been raised here and there for their miserable custom-house abortive purposes, and officers guard this black iron coast as if in mockery of nature's sublime desolation.

Yesterday I took my way out of a breach in the wall close above the west side of the port, where a few workmen were loading lava (their only stone) in small carts; making my way over the fantastic crests, gullies, precipices, of this semi-iron region, I came out, about a mile off on the cliff, to the remains of a large house: its

Digitized by Google

cellars remain; but even this is a recent structure and ruin. Parts of causeways and terraces were covered (as if some partly submerged common) by verdure, a short grass, and most welcome bit of green. I at first thought it had been surrounded and destroyed by the lava: not so; these bits of green on which a flock of sheep were nibbling, have, in pity to its utter desolation, been created since, though on the lava all about, scarcely a particle of any mould or vegetable substance exists.

I conclude these verdant parts were the *ashes'* streams, propped up here and there since by walls, evidently more modern. As I sat on various sharp ridges, the crests of these iron waves over chasms, where it had curled over, split, and fallen apart, &c., I picked up detached pieces to strike with, and found it everywhere very sonorous, like a metal. I broke off a few bits as hard and almost as tough as iron.

In some parts of this awful, interesting field, one sees a vivid sulphur colouring on the top; but generally one sombre dead black prevails, with tinted brownish red in the larger fractures.

The fantastic shapes in this iron scene are very curious; mimic art cannot carry this away, except in bits; for the colour and confusion defy the art of a painter,—the lights, and shadows, and shapes so hopelessly confounded; though caverns, and fissures, and

Digitized by Google

hollows, and peaks appear on all sides. Each in itself a picture, though indeed a sombre one.

Here one might meditate on the nothingness of that little conceited animal, Man, and spout homilies on the moral of our nature and of our existence: not, perhaps, in a hot sun quite so eloquently as I heard an hour after in a very animated sermon of the Padre *Guardo;* a travelled friar, in the Duomo; to a congregation of all the best-dressed men (not a woman) in the city,—not that the padre drew a single trope or illustration from this stern past catastrophe. How eloquent are these preachers, however! how graceful the action! how apposite, how various, how unaffected, natural, and easy! One should be born Italian to feel whatever *force* it had, but I can judge of a fine voice and the telling variety of tone, if nothing else.

One might have heard a pin drop: I have no doubt it accounts for half of his great popularity, even though it might possibly have been sufficiently commonplace; for I question whether a preacher dare quit one common-place *beaten track,* enlivened by local and domestic touches! In England we are afraid of action, and yet our greatest genius tells us to "suit the action to the word." Even Disraeli, the most eloquent and best speaker we have, is as stiff as a poker. Our clergy never rise to eloquence of any kind: it cannot be, reading as they do, painfully from a manuscript.

Digitized by Google

The lions here are the Greek theatre and baths, — both beneath beds of lava; in the last, of some forty feet depth (the level of the once city), where one sees part of the stream I have mentioned stealing across a cistern, where women descended for their jars of water. The Duomo is a fine church; so is that of the Benedictine monastery a noble structure; with its large terraced flower garden, where some twenty or thirty noble brothers lounge in learned leisure, like our Oxford Fellows; with as many inferior brothers, as servants. Of course — women not admitted: so, a lady with us was kind enough to sit in the church till our return from the garden, from whence the gardener took care we should present her with more than one nosegay!

Here too, outside the walls, as it lies in the west suburb, we traced the giant stream of lava, which appears to have encircled that part of the town before it fell in the sea forming the promontory I visited on the once wide sandy beach. The present wide wild sandy beach is seen, a mile or two farther to the south-west. The harbour itself, and all east of it, is quite a rugged lava shore for miles.

But I must not forget the finest thing in Catania, perhaps the most interesting, as in itself it contains almost all sorts of remains of the town and surrounding country:—the *Marquis di Biscari's*, whose palace is on

Digitized by Google

the waterside; over a solid rustic basement, forming an exquisitely rich wing of it, a jewel as a study. The marquis must have spent a long life making this rare and most rich collection. Greek granite columns and sarcophagi, marble statues, and a thousand rich remains, Greek and Roman; Etruscan vases, relics, in short, of every description, coming down through the middle ages from the most remote history of the island. Coins of all the empires, and I believe in all the metals: but of this profusion only a catalogue can give any idea. We are led through, and so an end: it is a lesser Museo-Borbonico! attention slumbers, and one's head aches, even from one's own intense attention. The Marquis (of whom somebody, who had a letter to him years past, has written so pleasantly — or have I dreamt it, in some book of travel?) is dead, years ago: a nephew now owns all this precious treasure. Would it were in Great Russell Street! I am convinced it might be, for little more of our public money than is lavished on bad pictures of very doubtful masters, for the wonderment of our National Gallery going public. For five thousand pounds we might have had Catlin's collection of curiosities of an interesting race, fast passing away, whose very history or reality will be doubted some day. But it is one thing to allow our Academy president to spoil good pictures, or buy bad ones, at five or ten

Digitized by Google

thousand pounds, and another, to secure such things really valuable and of interest to the nation.

A good large *speronaro* (lateen sailed boat) is starting for Malta: had I wanted to take advantage of it — impossible! my passport has been carried off to the police, thence to our vice-consul (who confirms all this needless trouble and vexation!), then back again — and in short the whole day is lost getting it returned me *viséed*, without which no boat or carriage dare take you off or on!

I must go to Syracuse; and there the same process is to be again gone through, — though it has already been viséed for these very places (and all Sicily and Malta) three times over; this unhappy sheet of Foreign-office paper, is nearly annihilated by stamps, scratchings, dirt, and stains.

In this respect England's Foreign Secretary is reduced to a mere cipher, and every English subject insulted and annoyed. In short, this passport passes one nowhere: how glad I shall be to throw it into the sea, which I intend, as a sacrifice to the free wave — the only touch of freedom kissing these iron shores!

There is a very curious fountain in the centre of the Piazza di Duomo, — an elephant bearing an antique granite Egyptian obelisk, — whose howda-cloth says it punished certain rebels and remained victorious. Two lines of Virgil mark this fountain at a very early date

Digitized by Google

under good King Symethus — a precious fount before his day,

> "Nomine rex olim tribuit mihi clara Symethus
> Hic mea, sed post hac clarior unda fluit."

The whole has a slight iron rail round it;—not enough to keep the children from getting in, I see, and plucking the roses and flowers round it. The whole is extremely interesting from its great antiquity, and as marking the spot, time out of mind, where a stream flowed dear to the inhabitants.

But what of Sicily as a granary — as the most fertile of islands! all her most immediate wants and miseries may be perhaps thrown on the bad crops of this last sad year. But it is impossible not to be struck by the extreme poverty of supply, in fruit, vegetables, fish, flesh, and fowl: here at Catania there is no market; oranges, which are good, seem the only thing in abundance, but not so cheap as at Messina. This want of every comfort goes on increasing round the coast as one gets south. The villages are most wretched,—and yet here we are close to the great and fertile plain which extends round Etna in a circuit of a hundred and sixty miles.

This stern reality destroys all one's cherished illusion about the fertility and abundance of Sicily; or is it this detestable government that ruins even open-handed nature? I understand that, besides vast tracts

Digitized by Google

of the island for ages left to utter sterility, much good land is abandoned by the wretched peasantry, from the impossibility of paying the increased heavy taxes on agricultural produce!

Here in Catania, as at Messina, walking about the town, looking at the grandeur of the churches, public buildings, and the many noble palaces, the public fountains, the taste, beauty, and solidity of all that earthquakes, lava, and the hand of time have spared, one cannot help being struck by the insignificance of their present possessors.

Whatever latent worth there may be, one hardly sees a man dressed or looking like a gentleman; nothing bespeaks any kind of stirring or social intercourse; hardly a private carriage; nothing appears neat, or kept clean, or in repair; not only the houses, so many left, or lived in half built or half finished; but everything which meets the eye bears the same stamp of idleness, penury, and neglect,—one turns from the public square of the Duomo, which contains all the idle life of the place, to the little port, with its equally idle coasting-boats hauled up on the beach, or waiting empty, on some senseless restriction:—everything, I repeat, smacks of poverty and neglect.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VI.

LEAVE CATANIA IN POST DILIGENCE. — CROSS THE PLAIN AND RIVER. — LEONTINUM. — ETNA FOLLOWS! — SYRACUSE. — ALBERGO DEL SOLE. — TEMPLES OF CERES AND MINERVA. — WASHERWOMEN IN ARETHUSA'S BATH. — JACK ROBINSON AND SONS. — EMBARK. — SCHOONER "CASSIOPEIA." — SKIPPER. — CONJUROR. — CAPE PASSERO. — CALMS. — MALTA. — HOTELS. — TROOPS. — TRANSPORTS. — ST. JOHN'S. — GOOD FRIDAY. — RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES AND PROCESSIONS. — THEATRES. — CAFÉS. — ICES. — MIDS. — PALACE. — CLEAN STREETS. — LEAVE IN "ARABIAN." — HORSES. — MULE. — GOATS' MILK. — DOGS. — REVOLVER PRACTICE AND RIFLE. — PASS CAPE MATAPAN. — SNOW-CAPPED MOUNTAINS OF GREECE. — SIRO. — MYTELENE. — ARCHIPELAGO. — TENEDOS.

THE only *diligence* to *Syracuse* and *Noto* is the Government mail; it starts in the morning, after the Palermo mail arrives (crossing the Island). The fare to Syracuse is two piastres, two-and-a-half carlins; and one fees the porter at the office, to be allowed to carry any trunk beyond about sixty pounds' weight; — it is winked at. The coachmen (three horses a-breast) are to receive a buono mano of three carlins, for the five relays in the fifty-one miles. I waited from eight till ten at the office. The porter demanded *two carlins* for winking at my trunk; — it weighs a little more than the regulation allows. The government conductor

Digitized by Google

seats himself inside with us, in a great pair of jack boots; and at last we start.

Crossing the stream of lava I have mentioned, we are soon in the plain; partially cultivated in wheat, vine, and the mulberry; some fields of beans in flower, but without the delicious scent of ours in England. We pass a large muddy stream, over a new temporary wooden bridge on piles, lately thrown over.

Nothing can be more wretched than the people and the huts along the road.

Following a rising stony ridge, a long ascent, we get to *Lentine* (Leontinum): a mile or two from it we see, to the right, a small bare lake, with nothing to recommend it but its reputed fish.

There are some antique remains here — a castle; but the ridge of rocky hills above the town (which lies at the foot of a picturesque and rich glen) assume the form, at this distance, of terraces and fortifications: — the strata of the rock everywhere on the heights, as regular as if the work of art.

Once more engaged in mountain defiles, the country is more interesting, — indeed it grows richer in its crops of wheat, beans, and its mulberry, fig, and olive orchards; with Etna behind us, towering over all, as i overtaking our receding steps, — for it is much plainer and assumes grander proportions than at Catania. It is seen thus, from the south, to much greater advantage than from the north, coming from Messina, — the

Digitized by Google

steep mountain range at Taormina partly hides it; we only catch glimpses in profile. This growing as one recedes gives some idea of its real magnitude!

The high road quits the sea-side, though we get sight of it every now and then. The city of *Augusta*, its port and lighthouse, are seen for hours, below us on the left hand. It is now a small town, utterly neglected.

As at Catania there is only one hotel ever spoken of to John Bull (the Crown), so at *Syracuse* we are all sent to "*il Sole*" (the Sun), which is certainly a better house, more comfortable, and with a better table: with the additional luxuries of good butter and green peas. Syracuse being the nearest, is the port most connected with Malta,—sending us fruit, and wines, wood and oil, in small quantities; but even this little trade languishes.

It is quite wonderful the extent and strength of the works we are driven through, before we get into the streets of this now small town. Moats, ravelins, curtains, immense walls, drawbridges, and sentinels! all to guard and confine rather the minds than any substance left the poor inhabitants. Trade there is little or none: in its fine land-locked harbour a few idle sloops, and pains-taking speronari, all invoking the gods, and murmuring at the enormous taxes the customs levy on everything, *out* or *in*.

Digitized by Google

If this tavern of the Sun thrives, it is the only house in the town that does; and they have fortune "*thrust on them*" by the English,— those knights errant who make the giro of the isle; or, like myself, are determined not to retrace their steps, by way of getting out of the clutches of the good King of Naples and his ten thousand insolent police and custom-house officers.

One may, by roughing it, get away from any of these towns in a speronaro to Malta, if in a hurry; as the regular steamers only touch at Messina. I was very near taking my passage in one from Catania; I, however, found a schooner about to sail, but so early in the next day (we did not reach Syracuse till dark the night before) that it was impossible to see the many interesting ruins of antiquity still visible here.

The whole place is a rock; and round above the present town are seen the remains of the ancient one; hardly however to be distinguished from the regular strata in terraces of the rock itself: some tombs mark the way a mile out, the remains of an amphitheatre, &c., for which see Murray. I think I was the only Englishman in Italy without him, and I suffered for the omission.

A little out of the modern town, round the harbour cut in the rocky cliff, is the Ear of Dionysius: but, more to my taste, in the fields over this circling cliff I recollect in years long past the most delicious grapes,—

Digitized by Google

and nothing more. How like a dream, tracing back, does one's past life seem!

But how are these smiling vineyards changed! It appears for these five years past their grapes have been attacked by a blight, as in France last year. Their olives, too, have suffered, and other fruit trees. All this has filled the measure of distress to poor Sicily. The Sicilians seem to think of nothing but their cigars; smoking is the one great business of their lives.

I had just time, with *Jack Robinson** and his two little boys, who ran beside me, to take a hurried look at the supposed Fountain of Arethusa, where the women were washing and drying their clothes; and in two subterranean holes near it, under the houses facing the port.

The effect of a swarm of these bare-legged creatures dabbling away in these darkness-visible caves, was curious enough. I looked down, smiled, and waved my hand to apologise for the intrusion on their mysteries (I need not, perhaps, dread the fate of Actæon!). Something one of the women said outside drew their eyes on me, and I was hailed by a general chorus of laughter—good-natured I am sure, and of course in my favour, as I had just bestowed a penny on an attendant

* An old English seaman turned Italian in spite of nature and his stars: his two sons, interesting, handsome boys, spoke English well, but were quite Sicilian: let me heartily recommend them as the most interesting Ciceronis to be found.

Digitized by Google

ragged nymph! They beg, but not disagreeably, and rather laugh than cry.

But this Fountain of Arethusa, thus sensibly and usefully degraded into a public wash-house, is doubly mythical. In the centre of the town are two granite columns of the Greek temple of Ceres, lying outside, broken, by the walls; and twenty-three (of forty-six?) of the magnificent columns of the Temple of Minerva still support the cathedral: they are partly built in, and filled up; appearing along the wall on the north side; others support the dome within.

They are fluted, and of grand proportions—seven or eight feet in diameter at the base.

I saw no more, obliged to get on board; and, with light variable winds and a most lovely day, we steal out of the harbour, and glide away towards *Cape Passaro.*

The constant passport nuisance is in full vigour up to the last moment, extending even beyond the shore,— for the Captain has now got possession of it, and has charge of me! The rapacious office made me pay a *piastre* and a half (7*s.* 6*d.*, exactly the Downing Street original price for this precious passport, which passes me nowhere!), although I had already paid for my exit at Naples, and it has since been twice viséed in addition, all to the same purpose. It is now so covered by stamps and scribblings of these vile myrmidons that it is quite

Digitized by Google

impossible to say what it all means. Nor do I get possession of this very valuable bit of paper, with its ornament of the Queen's and Lord Clarendon's arms, till put into my hands by the pratique officer at Malta; where, for the first time, for a couple of months, I feel myself once more really a free man; and desperately resolved not to put myself into the clutches of these harpies again; but alas! who can tell! I must say, with the Turks, Inshallah! Allah Acbar!

As I hate steamers, and have any amount of patience only with Dame Nature's beneficent tyrannies, I was hardly discontented at two days and a half getting to Malta (about eighty miles), in calms and light airs: our little schooner, the Captain assures me, is a clipper. He is a jolly fat fellow,—*Michael Cassio!* and his craft the constellation *Cassiopeia.* She sailed very well, though loaded pretty deep, and the deck full of fire-wood (olive); so, too, he managed her very well. It was, indeed, pleasing to see how quietly and brotherly everything was done; not an angry or loud word, except in fun or laughter, the whole passage.

We were on very meagre fare. In this the skipper took no notice of my not being Catholic—perhaps meant in compliment! I had laid out a dollar in bread, butter, milk, onions, eggs, and a kind of curds, "*Rigotte;*" but had there been every delicacy, our devil of a cook would infallibly have rendered them or it uneatable. It is

Digitized by Google

impossible to describe the dirty messes this animal served up, on a most dirty table-cloth, on the skylight; so that I fell back on my bread and butter and a little country wine — poor stuff, such as they put on the table at all the hotels, — neither bad Bronte nor Marsala, nor any other we know of; but known to the coast Sicilians.

I was not the only passenger Captain *Michael Cassio* had picked up; we had a young fellow as fat and as fair as himself, the Wizard of Syracuse, going with his Man Friday, a tall raw stripling, to astonish the Maltese, and its temporary new-come army, by his renowned tricks!

This young fellow, a go-ahead carbonaro and Syracusan lothario, joins the trade of *Improvisatore* to that of "*Prestigiatore*," and rather wondered at my not having heard of his fame! I told him of our egregious *Wizard of the North*, of M. Robin, and many others, who tire one to death in London, doing impossible things; but he doesn't seem to be much impressed by their renown;—he can do it all. As a small specimen, he converted a two-carlin piece for me into *quicksilver*, through half-a-dozen folded green papers; and slipped a knot in the same clever way, without untying;—both which tricks exceedingly bothered our second in command, or mate of the good schooner *Cassiopeia*. *Il Piloto*, who served for boatswain—and A.B.; and who piques himself on being knowing, created some fun by

Digitized by Google

his talent at dry jokes; practised on *Man Friday* and another raw youth. Il Signor Vincenzo Maoti gives an *academia* instanter in Malta, and bespeaks my good offices, so I feel bound to mention his conjurations. Poor handsome young fellow, he was no conjuror as to the ways of the world, where he is cast to struggle on as he can. I met him once afterwards; but heard nothing more of his academia.

The captain rows us all on shore in his launch, to the Pratique office, or harbour master's, where I at last get possession of my useless passport; but which, however, is so demoniacal that I begin to have a sort of reverent awe of it, and put it carefully by. What, if I come home by the way of Austria;—it may still serve as a peg on which to hang the usual insolent vexations.

The day delightful; but very hot. Sweating up the long ranges of street stairs, at Valetta, one admires the rich look of its streets — even after Catania! from the overhanging of the nice bay windows. But how clean and neat is everything in Malta; how sweet! after the abominations I have suffered through France and Italy.

It is Passion Week; — all the streets are crowded. Stradas St. Lucia, upwards; Stradas Reale and Mercanti, across, are the chief streets.

We pass a procession, wherein the Virgin and Judas Iscariot figure, and long lines of men, draped in sheets, looking through hoods with two eye-holes (horrid),

Digitized by Google

bearing crosses and tapers; and lots of boys carrying lanterns: a band of music heads this procession (the eve of Good Friday).

Malta I find comparatively quiet and empty. Our ten thousand troops have sailed for *Scutari*, and only the Guards left waiting for the arrival of Lord Raglan and the Duke of Cambridge. Colonel Sir William Reid is governor, and one might (if very young) envy him his fine palace, his command, and his title of excellency. Let us envy no one; — nothing is worth envying that man can either give or take; so, I dare say, thinks the good governor by this time. I myself am particularly easy, when I think of Malta in the dog days! * The spring, however, and autumn of the Mediterranean is abruptly variable, — from oppressive heat it turns suddenly cold.

An east wind next day, 15th, lashes the sea into the harbour's mouth; how beautifully it plays on the rocks, seen far down, from these curtains and bastions! Walk where you will about these vast fortifications, our soldier sentinels let you alone; not, like the animals I have just left, waving you off from any approach to their ramparts — so very sacred and valuable! You must not even look over the glacis, or through an em-

* Malta used to be famous for ices at the *cafés* — not so now. I found the one in vogue on the Palace Square full of mids calling for grog and cigars.

Digitized by Google

brasure. At the castle of *St. Ermo* at Naples, I stepped on the grass of the glacis which borders the road, and straight was waved off. I entered the gate next, and had quite a row with a corporal who forbade my looking right or left.

Steamers, postal and passenger, come and go very often; three ran in before us yesterday. The ———, a large transport steamer lying here, goes round to the Lazaretto harbour, ready to take the Guards off (the only regiment still here), quartered on the other side. Parties of men are constantly crossing on leave for the day, landing on the *Moscetta* stairs.

There is a French general here, and his staff, and a few artillerymen, the first of their nation, in uniform, since their short possession half a century ago. Our not giving up this same island caused all the havoc of that thirteen years' long war!

It is now the 16th of April, and still there is nothing new! In this war, after forty years' peace, all as yet lies behind the mystic veil of the future! Hardly yet begun—who can tell, or even guess the end! both sides confident; both sides invoking God to bless their arms! Yet, if truth and justice in this world are indeed something beyond empty words, the cause of England and France is now *the just one* — to prevent, if not punish, the hypocritical, grasping insolence of Russia.

There can be no doubt that Malta has improved in

Digitized by Google

a thousand items within this century; in houses, streets, public buildings, neatness—indeed in most exact cleanliness, for which it is now remarkable. However, the great features are still the same. Endless rock, hot walls, and guns peeping from their embrasures. The palace, and many palaces, still the same: what are fifty years or a hundred to them! or the noble cathedral of St. John's, which shines in its knightly marble inlaid floor, more than ever—richer than ever—for I observe it more; and yet even in my time have two or three generations of men passed away, — governors, admirals, generals, doctors, town-majors, and pleasant circles,— where once the glass went round, and pretty and fine ladies made tea for us, and much of us! All gone; all still! "Where are now their gibes." Saddened, I rub my eyes; yes, yes, it is all right: still —these *nix mangare* stairs seem no longer the same thing; and yet here are the same piles of fruit, haggling of customers, bawling of the crowd, and eager boatmen.

A cold south-east wind has been blowing into the mouth of the harbour for some days. This is the *sirocco*, but its coolness puzzles me! We every day hear the guards are to be embarked next day; but the day comes, and there is no move; — waiting, I hear, for Lord Raglan.

Though this is pre-eminently a garrison town, and

Digitized by Google

soldiers appear in all directions, yet there is seldom any trooping of the guards, as at garrisons at home; only once a week, on the small square opposite the governor's palace. I went this morning, amused, with the crowd, at the music and the manœuvres.

Luckily I hear, by accident, that a screw steamer, the *Arabian*, has come in, and starts directly. I hurry to the office of *Rose & Co.*, and get a ticket for a passage to Constantinople; six pounds, only half the fare of the Passenger Steam Company!

I should always dislike the whirling and jolting of the screw (most obnoxious in the cabin); but, except that, I found it preferable to the regular boats and long crowded tables. She was coaling in the great harbour close to the obelisk over Captain Spencer's remains, and where sundry names of fancy ships have been painted on the walls and rocks by poor Jack;—the "Happy *Terrible!*" When shall we cease giving our ships ridiculous, or bad, or inappropriate names: we have all heard of our *Forty Thieves;* but we still have our *Viragos, Vixens, Avengers* (she was miserably wrecked), *Revenges, Termagants, Furies, Furious,* and *Spiteful!* Well, the *Terrible* is happy notwithstanding; may she be terrible only to her enemies! Ramsay is a very good fellow.

As everywhere, we start many hours after the one

Digitized by Google

named as the "very last!" Coaling and getting horses on board, it was evident: and lastly, the anchor being foul of moorings, we did not get away till sun-set. The *Medway* and *Emperor* steamers, touching here full of troops, start at the same time, and soon leave us far behind.

We are three passengers in the cabin: a young Jew, a fellow of half-mad impulses, going to fight the Russians, or anybody, in spite of his friends!—and a Scotch quiet, cosmopolite Eastern traveller.

The captain is much like all others, and only tires one by endless repetitions, exaggerations, and very shallow silly boastings. However, he gets his vessel on well enough, and presides over our horridly cooked loads of meat and potatoes, morning, noon, and night. This is a change, at least, from Italian soup and maccaroni.

Our deck passengers are three horses, a mule, two bulldogs, and a poor goat, which gives us, kindly, lots of milk.*

One naturally looks about for something, the peculiar fabric of each place or country. Malta has her silver filigree work, very pretty as settings for brooches of lava, &c.; and good sponges are not very expensive,

* They are frequently hired, at so much the voyage, by the steamers; poor things, they have a sad time of it! At Malta, and all round these shores, they are remarkably fine, and are the greatest blessing the poor can boast of.

Digitized by Google

as with us; a pretty good one, two shillings. Oranges are good (Sicilian), and there is a much more plentiful market of all the fruits and vegetables common to (often from) Italy than one can see in the towns on the spot! — particularly Sicily, where every species of industry and enterprise seems crushed, and where this year the scarcity among the very poor leaves them hardly the common necessaries of life.

It is well we steam, though slow, for the wind remains obstinate east against us the whole way, but with fine weather. On the second day (in forty-two hours) we see the Greek mountains on our left hand, all capped by snow, — their forms very fine; in the evening we pass between Cape *Matapan* and *Cerigo* Island; with smoother water: we have had a long heavy swell all the way against us.

All these mountainous rocky shores of Greece are barren: rarely one detects a little patch of green on some hill-side, or a small village nestled in some hollow; but I think what marks the lonely neglected aspect of the land most is, that one sees no boats on the shores, no fishermen, not a living thing, nor sheep, nor cattle, nor even a goat, anywhere.

This holds good all the way up among the islands, — those near enough to distinguish objects, — till we pass the Dardanelles.

To be sure the sea is enlivened by numerous vessels

Digitized by Google

in sight,—small brigs and sloops, making their way up and down. Nor is the matter mended on the Turkish shores, Asia or Europe, till we approach *Gallipoli*, where some cattle and sheep at length appear on the flats: — still, there is more appearance of cultivation,— woods crown some of the hills, and fruit trees are scattered along the small valleys; the European side is, however, the most sterile of the two.

We pass Tenedos, where there is a fort and village — and next, *Besika Bay*, which seems no bay at all,— but on these bold shores and deep seas affords good anchorage on the Asian side, close to the entrance of the Dardanelles; where large towns have sprung up behind their castles. Four or five French sloops-of-war and store-ships entered with us; making the most of a fine fair wind; so essential in this passage, where the current sets out so strong to the westward, and where the breeze is always fickle, and calms frequent.*

As we passed up we saw a great many wrecks of vessels lying on the shore on both sides. This is the greater pity, as they are evidently very little hurt,— perhaps, as sound as ever; but their poor owners, once on shore, are unable to get them off, and any assistance

* These same castles, and those above, are more vexatious than awful. They could stop nothing but peaceful trading vessels; war steamers and men-of-war would laugh at them, or knock them to pieces. The strong current here alone makes them formidable.

Digitized by Google

from the apathetic idle Turk, hopeless. On the other hand, they remain intact,—not broken up, and made away with, as they would be elsewhere; though, if only as fire-wood in cold winters, they are still valuable.

In the Sea of Marmora we see the shores on all sides,—some of the more distant hills with snow still lingering on them: we pass the Islands of Marmora; the two smaller are barren rocks.

With half-steam on, to give us run for the night, by daylight we find ourselves off Seraglio Point, which rounding carefully (for the current of the Bosphorus sets strongly out), we anchor pretty close in at Tophana, at the mouth of the Golden Horn,—arriving before the Emperor and Medway after all, on the old adage of the hare and the tortoise.

The numerous minarets and domes of mosques relieve the general monotony of the tiled roofs on both sides; closer to us, the labyrinth of buildings mixed with the cypress at the Seraglio Palace pleases; otherwise one is more struck, I think, by the novelty than the beauty of the whole, at Constantinople. The numerous vessels, steamers, and boats in the Golden Horn help materially to enliven the scene. Outside the town of Scutari opposite, the new barracks and hospital are conspicuous objects; it must be more than two miles across to it. Small steamers now run backwards and forwards

Digitized by Google

and once a day up the Bosphorus to *Bayukdery* and *Therapia*.

There are swarms of *caïques* or wherries,—longer, rather, than ours, and narrower,—formed more like a canoe, and all richly carved; some of them a little gilt and varnished; but all kept with great care and neatness; nor do I find them so *very* ticklish as described. You sit, one, two, or three, down in the bottom on cushions, so that only the head and shoulders of the sitters are seen. The effect is odd enough; there is no danger of upsetting; only sit still.

The boatmen manage their oars very well; these *sculls*, for they are short, are poised by a swell in the wood near the hand, which balances the longer blade in the water; which always ends in a crescent shape —not round or pointed, as ours are. All these *caïques* are much alike, about twenty feet long, and three wide: on the whole they are very elegant, very scientific, very efficient. The jolly crew of the Danubian "*Water Lily*" may take a lesson from them! There seems no set fare, so one makes a bargain: on or off to the nearest shipping, two piastres,—sometimes, to a native, half a piastre (a penny): across to Scutari from three to five piastres; often much less, especially from the Turks. Parties of Turkish women are rowed about in them for a few paras. Indeed, in no one thing can one ever get at what *should* be paid for anything!—we

Digitized by Google

English, and travellers of all sorts, constantly giving preposterous sums for everything; so that now it is enough to have a hat on, and not be understood, to be marked as a good prize.

When I landed, the porters fought for my baggage; and the commissioner of the Hôtel de l'Europe made me pay three francs for the boat (though he had hired it to come off in) and bringing my things up a quarter of a mile from Tophana to the hotel. I may be certain he did not pay them a quarter of it; and still paid perhaps rather more than usual, as it was a Greek festival, and they are generally ready to sacrifice even their self-interest to the fun of the day. The streets are crowded, drums banging and pipes squeaking in all directions.

I am agreeably surprised both at the houses and the streets; both so very much better than I imagined I should find in a Turkish town! nor are they at all so low, so dark, or so small as I thought; generally of two stories, with bay windows, and projecting balconies everywhere; like our old houses of the middle ages, or Elizabethan; in their comfortable recesses, niches, galleries, and latticed windows.

Nothing of the dull, dead, white mud walls of Egypt: all here is open and lively, with an air of comfort,—that is, dry wooden floors and stairs, even in the poorest old tumble-down tenements; and certainly

Digitized by Google

the greater number are in a rare picturesque state of decay and dilapidation,—the outer boards curled up by the sun, broken, and looking as inflammable as tinder! — the greater part of these wood houses innocent of paint, although perhaps fifty years old.

But if the wooden houses of Constantinople have their good looks and their interior good qualities, not so the lanes or streets. I was prepared for sand and dirt, and no paving whatever; — but unfortunately they are paved; but in a such a way as to make it difficult to walk along at all — as if stones of all sizes had been thrown out of carts at intervals, and left to find their own places.

Yet over this rough, execrable way, they drag their odd primitive carriages, containing the richer Turkish women, with their noses and foreheads muffled up most disagreeably in a sort of muslin wrapper, rather than veil — the yak-mash.

Men ride along, the horses picking their way; and now and then one meets some great man getting well, jolted in his low open phaeton and one horse. Most of the coachmen walk at the horse's head; so too, on horseback, the groom walks beside his master — the pipe-bearer behind.

If bullock carts, or loaded mules, or asses are coming along, of course you get out of the way,— nor is it difficult.

Digitized by Google

Walking about, I find a general civility; and though the streets are particularly crowded at this Greek festival, yet jostling is everywhere avoided,—all pass on without notice or remark: no notice is taken of Europeans,— the Turks have got used to our dress and our ways, and are too well-bred to laugh openly at us, however strange or queer we may appear.

They may gently shrug up their shoulders, as we pass them at their pipes, at the cafés in remote streets, but there is no rude staring, nor any sneering; though I have no doubt they are often tempted. This, however, is a favourable moment, with some thousands of our men encamped and in barracks at Scutari; — and we are here as *deliverers!*

Still, very little of such a benefit is at all felt by the million! What do our London population know or care for this or that squadron in distant seas, this or that corps d'armée in distant lands! — even though a Sunday paper's contents may be heard of by one out of a dozen! Now here, they know nothing beyond their own immediate calling and concerns,— nor ever, I dare say, trouble their heads with anything not under their noses, and in their hands: that, and prayer and their pipe, fill up their quiet contented lives.

The next thing we have heard so much of in the streets, are the dogs,—a yellow-brown race, between a wolf and jackal:—hard is their lot, poor things! They are not at all troublesome.

Digitized by Google

Generally, in the day, they lie asleep about the streets, under the people's and horses' feet, and, most extraordinary, never get trod on; so careful and gentle are the Turks: true, they are half starved; nobody owns them, but nobody hurts them. It seems, however, our soldiers kill them for fun! The example is set by our young officers: one of these gentlemen at the table d'hôte was boasting of how many he had shot already! and, to diversify the fun, how many tame pigeons!—to the very natural anger and disgust of the inhabitants. So much for our morals and our fun!

If their commanding officers do not put a stop to this wanton cruelty — this selfish, insolent disregard for the feelings of others we are so prone to — we shall very soon not only be despised, but detested.

I was in hopes our men could not get spirits of any kind,— but I hear they can, by buying a bottle at a time, of the Greeks at Scutari and Galata; the consequences will be drunkenness, and ill conduct of all kinds. It is well only the sergeants and corporals get leave to cross to Constantinople or Pera.

So much has been written about Constantinople, that I am in despair of gleaning anything new. The Pera side, where all we travellers land, is quite as much Turk as the city itself across the Golden Horn,— it is its suburb: there are three wooden floating bridges; Pera is their Surrey side the water. You land at *Tophana*,

Digitized by Google

close by the Mosque, the saluting battery, and the arsenal: leaving Galata and the wharves near the first or outer bridge far to the left, you ascend through queer labyrinths of streets to the hotels. I went to the *Europe* kept by Greeks; close to the Russian and Austrian embassies; still, in Tophana; for Pera (proper) begins higher up the hill and town; where one long straggling street leads along the top of the hill, and down, with various windings, to the first bridge (at Galata).

On the west of this hill's crest lies an immense wood of cypress, a Turkish cemetery: — the only nice bit to walk in to be found — this wood is the best part of Pera. Some of the hotels face it, much more pleasant than the *two* most frequented (the "*Angleterre*" and "*Europe*"), which are very expensive, and very bad in every possible way.

It is quite impossible to stir without a Greek who speaks Turkish: of course the Greeks, *en masse*, speak nothing but Greek or Turkish; in vain you try French or Italian. I, however, crossed the bridge alone, passed the great mosque (the *Yeni-jery*) close to it, and made my way upwards to the bazaar. An old Greek Jew picked me up, who had previously picked up enough French and Italian and English to make confusion worse confounded. However, he showed me the bazaar, and helped to cheat me.

Even the Turks ask as much again as they will

Digitized by Google

eventually take. Your offering half is no criterion, for one is quite ignorant of what the prices should be. I found Burnous's, slippers, amulets, attar of roses, and cherry-stick pipes, with amber mouth-pieces, at absurdly high prices. They *may* refuse your offer of half (very dear at that), and smoke on in comfortable apathetic silence. Not so the Greeks, Armenians and Jews, whose outward appearance closely resembles the Turks. They are all in commotion at the sight of John Bull; call out after us, pull you into their shops, insist on your being seated, dispute with each other for you, particularly in the silk stuffs and scarf quarters; unfold fifty things, and fairly astound one with their volubility and impose on you by their tricks—quite equal to our Oxford Street dodges! At one shop I bought some rose water of the "first quality"—mere water put into a turpentine bottle, the cotton stopper of which they had scented with attar of roses! This was so atrocious, it was impossible, however provoking when I found it out, not to laugh.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

J.W. OLDMIXON, R.N.

M. & N. HANHART IMP.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VII.

PERA.—OUR CAMP AT SCUTARI.—THE GREAT CEMETERY.—HAPPY FLOCKS.—A WET REVIEW.—THE SULTAN'S PALACES.—ABDUL-MEDJID AT MOSQUE.—GOOD-NATURED TURKS.—ABOVE THE BRIDGES.—UNKNOWN TONGUES.—GALATA GROG-SHOPS.—DRESS OF OUR ARMY.—PERA GATES SHUT.—CHRISTIANS IN THE SADDLE.—SIGHT-SEEING FIRMAN.—OLD PALACE AND MOSQUES.—SULTAN'S STUD.—PAGES, BATHS, LIBRARY.—LADIES' GARDEN.—VIEW FROM WINDOWS.—OUR QUEER DRESSES.—LIBRARY AND BED.—ARMOURIES.—MOSQUES.—ST. SOPHIA.—IDLE INTRUSION.—MASSIVE WALLS.—KITCHEN CLOCK.—ATMEIDAN.—SACRED PIGEONS.—MAHMOUD'S MAUSOLEUM.—SLAVE MARKETS.—BANISHED GREEKS.—GENERAL APATHY.

THE spring bursts on us suddenly: these last two days have been melting, in the sun; now towards the end of April. To day, by hearsay (for nothing is ever known certainly), was to be a review of our regiments at *Scutari*, on the common beyond the great barracks towards *Kodukai*, a village on the point below, in the Sea of Marmora: so, too, it was said the Sultan would be present; in consequence, a good many of the Pera idlers went over, but nothing took place;—put off, it seems.

Digitized by Google

I went over in one of the caïques with two others, landing below the barracks, on the rocks. Here some of the troops, just arrived, were landing from the transports, with baggage, horses, &c. One fine valuable horse was killed by some mismanagement, and lay floating about, poor thing, under the boats' keels.

We have lately seen our Camp at Chobham, so I did not stop to see all the usual routine at the tents; —some just setting up, — some of the men busy cooking in the square of these new monster barracks.

Soldiers, and an army, are best seen drawn up, or marching to their military band, with all the pomp and circumstance of war! By the by, this dilatory war is said now to be once more on the point of—not beginning at all! Some new proposal of the Czar.

Our embassy is in a large stone mansion on the top of Pera hill; and nothing known there officially leaks out, except to a favoured few who have the run of his Excellency's domicile.

Some of our regiments are encamped, some in these barracks, —a noble pile of building, quadrangular, with a high tower at each corner, —said to be capable of containing ten thousand men; the windows are placed three and three, in groups (three stories). There is, too, an extensive hospital, half a mile behind them: both on the plain at the south-west outskirts of Scutari, and exactly opposite the Seraglio point.

Digitized by Google

I strolled on above the town to where a cypress grove marks the largest of the Turkish cemeteries. I traversed its whole length: the high road, indeed several roads, run for a mile through it, and down into the middle of the town, which extends, perhaps, two miles on the bank of the Bosphorus, upwards from the barracks.

This burying-ground is a great curiosity. The tombs, the marble pillars, slabs, turbans, erect and broken, and strewed about, are thick as Vallambrosa's leaves! How many generations has it taken to fill this enormous extent!—so thickly strewed, that in the whole mile or more (the breadth more than half a mile, up and down hill, at the town end, mingled with the houses) one cannot step clear of this chaos of marble!—mostly finely carved, while the richness of the Arabic character,—always in bas-relief,—makes even the plainest form handsome.

A great many are gilt and painted. Numbers of the more modern have the dull-red fez; the tassel gilt: some of these are very small, for the children,—of all diminutive sizes, as if marking the age of the child. The shape of the men's turbans is infinite—a study! but what on earth is there that does not deserve a study! Time hurries on, and I am forced to pass on by tomb-sculptors and coffee-houses along the road. A large flock of beautiful sheep cross my path; their fleeces

Digitized by Google

looking so clean — many with extraordinarily large twisted horns, feeding their way through this forest of tombs.

Here they graze, under the shade of this funereal forest. I sat on a broken turban, and watched their shepherd; he did not press them (they were crossing the dusty road), but quietly let them get on; and no dog worried them.

I love the Turks for their toleration of, and gentle kindness to all living things: thence it is one sees such an easy familiarity with all the four-footed and feathered tribe. Yet we call ourselves most civilised!

Following this road, turning back towards the Bosphorus, brought me into Scutari, a mile from where I landed, under the barracks; so I threaded my way among labyrinths of streets, met many Turkish women, and a few men, but without observation passed on back to the boat.

The small steamer which plies to the first or outer Golden Horn Bridge, was ready to start; so, as my Turk and caïque had got some other fare, I went on board (first in a small boat from the rocks), paying two piastres, and landing on the bridge; to cross which the toll is five paras (half-quarter of a piastre,—a farthing).

Scutari (the Turks call it *Uscutar*) lies very prettily on its steep slopes to the water side; and, thus inclined to

Digitized by Google

the north, away from the sun, is, I fancy, cooler than here at Pera. I should prefer living there, clear of the crowds and dirt of Pera or Galata.

Yesterday it rained hard all the afternoon, and the review *did* take place. Only a few favoured of us strangers in the land knew it, and crossed over to get wet; so, for once, there was nothing to regret.

It seems the *Seraskier* was present; not the Sultan; and of course our Commander-in-chief, who has arrived.

To day, we hear, the Guards disembark (indeed, we may see them from the hotel windows), and join the rest of the army, in barracks or encamped.

This is Friday, and the Turkish Sunday; the Sultan goes to a small mosque, lately built, close to his palace at *Abasiktas*, about two miles above Pera, on the Bosphorus. This is the *Mahmoudièh* Palace of his father. The present Sultan has never lived at the renowned old palace of the Sultans at Seraglio Point, in the city itself — neglected even in the last reign.

I took a Greek guide (George, one of the hangers-on at the Europe), and got into a caïque: it was a good long pull, and against the current. The day very fine; but a cold wind from Olympus (south), which has got a new covering of snow. This side, like the other, is quite a string of villages, and good-looking water-side houses, of the more opulent. First, we pass the Sultan's new palace, of stone, not yet finished, though

Digitized by Google

they have been at it for eight years. Some of the rooms are, however, furnished — from England and France; and he has had half a dozen architects of all nations.

It is, like all the buildings, of no decided order; but certainly, what with terraces, balconies, and pillars, has a very pretty, rich effect along its façade, — so has the older wooden one where he lives, which has partly served as a pattern, I conclude.

We pass the villages of *Dulmabaxy*, at the new palace, then *Fundokly* and *Ortakai*, and land at the palace boat-house, walking half a mile between the palace-garden walls; which form a good approach to the mosque.

I was too late to see him go, but had a very good look at him, after waiting half an hour, on his return. The hour is from twelve to one, and he goes to most of the mosques alternately. His guards were drawn out in a long double line from the palace-gate to the mosque: besides the Officers at their posts, about a dozen stood together at the head of the line, and a great many high personages, about the Court, stood in two lines outside the mosque entrance; there were few strangers, and but a few of the villagers. A few women (Turkish) and children pushed in near the soldiers; and, indeed, loaded donkeys and labourers, passing about their business, were allowed to break the

Digitized by Google

line, while several dogs barked and played about very irreverently.

We were pretty near. We could hear the chaunting of the prayers within, in horrid discord! — much worse than the Catholic chaunt. At length, the grand officers drew near the steps; several led horses were walked past; and, lastly, a black horse, with diamond and gold saddle-cloth, on which he came; then a grey, equally richly caparisoned, was led to the steps, where a dark coloured cloth had been carefully spread. His ministers and high officers, lords, generals, &c., stood on each side. The Sultan stepped out quickly rather than with any state, and mounted exactly as any of us would do. He wore a blue short cloak over his uniform, a blue frock, embroidered collar, and diamond star, with the same dull-red Fez or scull-cap, and blue tassel hanging behind, worn by everybody.

The band, stationed on the spot, struck up; the priests, and, I believe, all the retinue, raised the cry of "*Long live the Sultan!*"

There is no end to men's opinions; the most diametrically opposite are instantly formed of the self-same thing before our eyes! Thus, many of the English, catching it from each other, would say he was extremely thin, and looked jaded and worn out! To me he seemed, on the contrary, to be of a good average stoutness; his features are marked, not handsome, and he appears

Digitized by Google

above the middle height rather. They said he looked dejected — jaded! How absurd to speculate in this way on the constant serious deportment of a Turk; all are serious — here it is particularly etiquette. Nor is the paleness of his face any criterion of sickliness or health; most Moslems are so, among the higher ranks.

I think one of the most remarkable and loveable things about the Turks is their gentle kindness to every living thing about them; there is no cutting and worrying at their horses; they drive or are followed by their cattle or sheep as if of one family, and the confidence of the whole lower creation in every shape towards them is quite delightful to look at.

The very dogs which lie about under their feet in the streets are never hurt or kicked; where one sees any exception to this rule, it is sure to be a foreigner or a Greek! These same poor dogs, though unavoidably half-starved from their great numbers, yet are not without being known, each in his own street; and though not so much owned by anybody, are yet fed more or less by all who have anything to spare,— indeed every eatable refuse is thrown to them.

From our ambassador's garden wall, to the north,— where you get rid of these wretched, dirty, narrow streets, and where you infallibly lose yourself,— and walking down through the Grove Cemetery (the park of Pera and its lungs), I got a caïque on the wharf, near

Digitized by Google

the Turkish barracks, below the dockyard, and pulled up the Golden Horn, under the third bridge upwards. This spot is above the second bridge, at the foot of the grove: it opens out in a pretty valley; and these hills and valleys run on, forming the banks of the Golden Horn up to its head, where it joins the Valley of Sweet Waters; — a continued town near the water.

We first pass the dockyard, off which are moored three old line-of-battle ships (one a three-decker) and three very old frigates,—all of them, indeed, unfit for service.

The Turks are fond of an enormous gilt lion rampant as figure-heads. Outside the yard were a string of small floating guard-houses, each with its guard and sentinel; to what end I cannot make out. They were building a small steamer, and a frigate (in her ribs) is begun on its slip; but there seemed no activity of any kind. The yard is small, and open to the water; but no guns, anchors, cables, tanks, or what are called stores, were at all visible.

There is, however, a small range of store-houses, with a handsome building or two for the officers, and offices.

I did not go quite to the head, but rested to let my Turk smoke his pipe; holding on our caïque to a pile on the opposite side; I was not aware of any stream or

Digitized by Google

current running out; but so it is, and pretty strong just here, as if a large river ran into it.

I must look for this river (the "*Sweet Waters*") another day: I have only heard of the "*Sweet Waters*" as a *small* stream running through its valley.

I gave my boatman four piastres, and am vexed to say he *did* me; giving me a fifty para piece in change instead of two piastres (eighty). I have a confidence in the Turks, high and low; and, not dreaming of being tricked, and not knowing their marks on silver or notes, I gave him a piastre by way of *backshish* to seal the bargain. Well, I wont alter my mind for this one little act of dishonesty,— perhaps my own fault.

How miserable it is not to understand these people, or be understood, or exchange a single word beyond *yok* and *evet*—this is a sad moral blindness we grope about in; so that we know in reality little or nothing of any country's people beyond our own.

Landing near the outer bridge at Galata, I rambled about its excessively dirty streets,— as it rained hard yesterday, and all the water and mud runs into this lower part of the town.

I think this waterside the most extraordinary picture of old wooden houses, in every possible stage of decay and tumble-down, it is possible to conceive: some propped up; some leaning at a good threatening angle; others, the outer boards quite rotten, broken in

Digitized by Google

bits,— their sheds, balconies, verandahs, and cafés all in the same state,— and all full of people in full smoke, or talk, or small trade; — a cadi, or a police officer, was administering justice in one of them to a crowd.

As one walks along the chief street at Galata, towards the outer shipping, one gets among our own sailors— French, Italians, and Germans — nothing can exceed this scene in tippling and small depravities; those of the lower world.

Jews, Greeks, and women, all bent on one object, —to get all the money they possibly can out of sailors and soldiers: happily very few of our soldiers can reach this side of the Bosphorus. A party of sailors from the French steamer Pandore had evidently drunk a great deal. As I ascended near the great Genoese tower, another set of them had collected a crowd; two of them were down on the ground quite drunk; another, not quite so far gone, while helping his messmates to tumble about, harangued the Greeks and Turks,—telling them, in good French, as how they had come to fight for them with "*les braves Anglais*," and that they ought to be very grateful to us: but I fear his talk was lost on the astonished crowd; they were, however, very intent on this novel and disgraceful sight.

This is a part of our superior civilisation for them to, wonder at. They know nothing about our goodness,

Digitized by Google

or our virtue, but they *see* this. I myself was astonished at seeing French sailors in such a pickle.

Continuing onwards through the high-street of Pera I met Lord Raglan coming from our ambassador's, surrounded by his staff, all on foot. He looks well—and his armless sleeve, warlike—even graceful.

I wish, devoutly, our uniform were changed; the cock's feathers in triangle cocked hats, and the shell jackets of our line officers, are both a mistake. There is no grace, no meaning, no use in them. We continue to dress our soldiers and sailors worse, and less handsomely, than all other powers (the Turks, perhaps, excepted); and so it will be while our present system goes on, and the present taste reigns.

Formerly we appeared superior in this to other nations; but the march of these last fifty years has changed it all against us: we are far behind in many things essential to a great country in this age.

Happily our men fight well under any disadvantage—when the look of the thing is not thought of. I see our papers are beginning to make a stir about it; but why are the taste and intelligence of our *Horse Guards* and *Admiralty* so far behind the everyday world? "and echo answers why?"

The Turks have a very good and attentive police on foot, with corps de garde in all the chief streets, where sentinels two and two stand together on a little

Digitized by Google

board platform. Besides a patrole going the rounds at night, watchmen keep wide awake, and, as they walk the streets, strike their iron-shod staves on the stones: this peculiar ringing sound is heard a long way off; now and then they call out, but what they say I know not.

Walking about after dark is not allowed without a lantern; indeed, without a moon, it would be difficult, if not dangerous. Besides all this, no sooner is it dark than they shut all the gates leading to the water-side.

I was very nearly shut out one evening at about seven o'clock, when it is now barely night. I conclude a small fee and a good account of oneself would let one in,—with the chance, however, like "old Dan Tucker," of knocking at the door in vain, if the guard or porter were asleep, or out of hearing, or out of humour. All these gates are of wood, very old, and worn out; two or three strong men might easily break them down: but the Turks seem never to calculate on force; so strong is the law, so well a single word is understood, so impossible to oppose the despotic will, that a hurdle across at any barrier would be quite effective.

At this moment, the Greeks, Jews, Armenians, &c., of course are more at liberty, and presume more than was ever even imagined half a century ago.

Digitized by Google

Added to this peculiar war—called religious and on their behalf (on both sides!); yet, they are well aware of their subordination, which habit, besides, has made a second nature.

I see the Greeks are now allowed to ride horses: there are always at the chief landing-places, and in the suburbs, towards the artillery barracks (above Pera), a good many of these hack horses, kept ready saddled, at the rate of from a franc to five or six, according to time and distance, — the owner running beside you as groom.

These horses are small (all the Arabs are), but often very handsome, fine limbed, strong, and enduring, and get over these impossible, rough, steep streets, without stumbling or falling; more than ours could, till inured to such ways.

It leads one to think how ill-judged it is, our sending horses out here at all: so far by sea half kills them; they get maimed, lamed, lost—and never to return; to say nothing of the enormous expense! A regiment of dragoons, I should think, would cost as much as any three or four of the line, and after all be of doubtful use; for the enemy's cavalry must for ever out-number, two to one, any possible force we can send, or the French combined; — all battles are won or lost by the foot. This may be disputed; but, at any rate, our cavalry could be mounted here, quite, if not more

Digitized by Google

efficiently, at comparatively little expense — the men bringing their saddles, bridles, and arms.

The enormous sum which the sending of our small army here has already cost us, while yet they have not marched a step or fired a shot, is quite astounding; as are some of the mistakes already made. To be sure, war in good earnest takes us by surprise, officers and soldiers were few of them born when Waterloo closed the last: if we except a poor old veteran here and there, the trade has all to be learned over again; and we shall have to pay dearly for a new experience.

If one does not cram for the occasion before leaving home, it is essential to have Murray's or some other hand-book, describing what is best worth seeing; without this, the things themselves fail to awaken the interest they deserve; and nowhere is all this more essential than at modern Constantinople, though the Turks do morally stand still. I will, however, set down one of the *firman* days, as they arrange matters now. The Sultan and his ministers may thank their stars that we step in to rescue them from the Russians, and may yield a few points to Christians, compelled by the growing force of circumstances more than ambassadors' notes, which always forget to open the mosques or the palaces, or anything, to us, unpaid for: thus, to see the few remaining antiquities, the Palace (Seraglio), St. Sophia and other mosques, a firman is imperative,

Digitized by Google

and is sold to certain Greeks, at a prime cost of ten or twelve guineas. Now, when these undertakers can find travellers, and the curious in sufficient numbers to pay them well at so much a head, we are collected at the various hotels, in one, two, or three parties, and taken the round, across to the city; beginning at the Seraglio.

It is at once mean and ungrateful; for it is well known that this tax falls on the English chiefly,—joined in fewer numbers by the French and Americans,—the only friends the Turks have!

It is the first of May, and a lovely day; we muster at the *Hotel de l'Europe* a party of some eighteen, including two American ladies: the *Angleterre* hotel turns out a party twice as numerous, which, passing our hotel, gets the start of us. All on foot, away we go, down to a wharf at Tophana, and get into *caïques*, two and two (left to get across as we best can), with our various Greek ciceroni (*commissioners*), who carry our slippers, first bought of them for the occasion, at ten piastres: we all pay our conductor (the Greek, who gets the firman) ten shillings,—all other expenses not included, but they are trifling.

We land under the Seraglio walls opposite Tophana, where there is a handsome green kiosk (pavilion), and immediately ascend to the palace end of this vast enclosure called the Seraglio, up slopes and walled-in groves, where sheep are feeding,—along immense but-

Digitized by Google

tresses, groves, passages, stairs, terraces, and courts innumerable. As we pass along, there is nothing very remarkable to arrest the attention beyond the mysterious stillness.

We pass an enclosed square, where the Sultans formerly blessed certain caravans on departure, and a long corridor above, leading from the Sultan's palace to the Sultana's.

I must not attempt to describe, but mark a few things on our way.

Coming up the first area green slope, an antique column of Theodosius stands alone (the arts had then declined): of grand proportions, it is a good deal worn; the capital, a bad composite, puzzled our scholars who had left their Murray behind them.

We then see the stables. There were about fifty or sixty horses; no unsocial stalls, but each horse fastened by ropes round the hind feet, to prevent kicking, should they differ in opinion.

They were rather larger horses than usual, but not at all handsome; nor showing much blood.

Indeed, the Arabs the Sultan rode on Friday to mosque were far from being so handsome or spirited as many we saw ridden by his young officers about the streets.

We now entered the apartments of the palace; — the rooms all looking up the Bosphorus, — the view de-

Digitized by Google

lightful, — perhaps, the best part of the show on the whole, except one large saloon; the ceiling rich in gilding, but nothing exquisite — not approaching the beauty or luxury of our Brighton Pavilion. Indeed, none of the rooms were either very curious or magnificent, and all rather small; the curtains to the windows everywhere paltry and in the worst state; the furniture scanty and covered, but nothing in stuffs beneath, or in shape or gilding, worth covering.

I should have begun by saying, that this vast palace, and all its various buildings, is now comparatively empty and neglected; nobody of consequence lives here: it is left in charge of certain officers, old servants, and eunuchs, a body or school of the Sultan's pages, who are pretty numerous, and a corps of the Sultan's guards: even these are scattered about over this vast space in such a way, that, as we pass along, all seems silent and solitary. The Sultan's bath is not a bit too large — there are no *baths* according to our sense of the word, — a plain marble floor, and two cocks for hot and cold water; his subsequent *reposing* room is gloomy, and but so-so; and his bed room very small (for a monarch) and plain: indeed, all the furniture is plain, poor, and in bad taste, — since nothing is purely Turkish, but a mixed attempt at European notions.

In the same way, on one side the long gallery leading

Digitized by Google

to the Sultana's and women's pavilion or serai are hung mediocre engravings from England and France, — views, battles (many of Napoleon's eventful life,) such as one sees so much of in Paris. Nor are any of them apparently proof plates! — some very coarse and bad; the frames paltry.

Along another gallery above, leading to the Harem, are Turkish attempts at drawings, buildings, groups, landscape — all poor things, but curious.

Mixed with these on the walls is the Sultan's signature, in gilt oval frames (as it is on all the coins), and in various other parts of the palace, together with frequent quotations from the Koran, or moral sentences proclaiming the goodness and power of God and the Prophet.

Altogether, these handsome gold writings in the Arabic character are the most harmonising and the richest ornaments seen inside or outside their buildings.

We are next shown the Ladies' Garden and Palace. However, all the gilding and ornaments, in good or bad taste, are lavished on their lord and master, for here all is plain, even to poverty. The same kind of grand oval saloon, with nice matting and fine Turkey carpets, raised (divans round) to the windows, overlooking Scutari, Pera, and the waters. The view on all sides on the Bosphorus and Golden Horn, far and near, is very rich and beautiful, — the extent and variety making

Digitized by Google

up for a certain frittering sameness in their one ornamental tree — the funereal cypress. There are, it is true, other trees in the Seraglio, — some fine immensely large planes, and two or three grand spreading palm pines; but the cypress of the cemeteries and the Seraglio is the one conspicuous thing everywhere, — only very good, in the absence of other trees; the whole surrounding view being a rich mixture of cypress, brown roofs, minarets, and mosques.

To add to this effect of scattered light, the waters are covered by our shipping, their pointed masts and funnels vying with the cypress and minaret needle-shaped points. At length one sighs for a lawn, an elm, or an oak, and the soft unbroken shadows of a common English garden. How infinitely finer the broad expanse of verdure, the clumps, and lovely green meanderings of our own parks; but comparisons, of course, would be senseless. This is one beauty. Here the eye, delighted, ranges round to the south by the snow-tipped range of Olympus and the mountains bordering the sea of Marmora; then, sweeping over Scutari to the more distant hills of the Bosphorus, about Therapia, Buyukdere—dwelling on the rich hills about the *Asiatic Sweet Waters*, above Scutari. One cannot see the Valley of the Golden Horn, Sweet Waters, at its head, hidden by the hills and houses of the northern part of Pera, which range northward for

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

J. W. GLOMKOM, R. N.

M. & N. HANHART IMP.

SERAGLIO POINT FROM TOPHANA.

Digitized by Google

miles up and down,—more or less in streets and garden-houses, — as it does on the bank of the Bosphorus.

But I should not digress. We advance, following the various people in charge, and a Turkish officer of the palace, all impatient to get us along; our party straggling, — and provokingly curious of course, — wandering about, some in the Ladies' Garden — a very formal one of little beds of tulips and stocks, — not a geranium in blow! and rough white gravel walks.

We were allowed to pluck a few of these flowers: indeed, our Greek attendants began, and one young Turk obligingly gave me a small nosegay.

Across this garden we mount a high walled terrace, which shuts it in to the west; and, through courts and portals, get to the library (the Sultan's), in a handsome court-yard of many buildings and cloistered galleries; a tower, a handsome fountain — always in the shape of a square low pavilion, with Arabic sentences, sculptured and gilt. Here we saw a good many young pages in loose gowns, very slovenly, if not dirty. They stared at us — ourselves a motley group, some in hats, some in wide-awakes, some in Fezes. One man, escaped from his governor and city desk, very long-legged and handsome, was done up in a queer fanciful dress, neither Turk, Greek, nor anything else. His long limbs were encased in very tight trowsers, with long boots to match, which he was forced to tug on and off at all the tombs,

Digitized by Google

mosques, &c. By way of variety, he walked about in his not very clean stockings, and was particularly tenacious of seeing *everything*, whether worth it or not; though not in our conductor's bond or programme — the mint, for instance, where there is nothing doing, and some tomb — as we passed on.

The library, as may be supposed, is very small; the room dark, the few books not bound, or perhaps in parchment. Here is a rich bed the Sultans once sat on when giving audience; and they unrolled a curious map of the genealogical tree of the Sultans, the portraits, eighteen of them, on the branches; up to the last *Mahmoud*. Oh! could some of these worthies have come to life and seen to what vile uses these sacred precincts had come!

We advance to the next court (still going to the westward and towards St. Sophia, which is at a short distance beyond the outer grand portal — the "Sublime Porte"), along an avenue of cypress trees, a tower to the right, and a range of kitchens to the left, whose chimneys have a singular effect, like gigantic inverted funnels.

Through a great gateway we come upon the largest and best area or court (or rather the first, taking the proper order of entrance, by the *Sublime Porte*). The mint, a plain building, was on our right. Here the most remarkable thing is an enormous plane tree

Digitized by Google

there are two; but one must be near forty feet in circumference, the trunk very short; nor are the branches in proportion, to be sure.

We now entered the *Armoury*. A silent Sultan, of the times of the crusades (?), in complete chain armour, stands on either hand. Like these effigies, all here is borrowed from Europe; pretty well arranged, and in very decent order; but nothing new or interesting. The muskets with percussion locks. Some ranges of long pikes — the only real Turkish thing.

From this court we see (close by, outside,) the new Polytechnic School, now building in the European style, large and handsome. This, the first school of the kind, in imitation of the French, was in the chief Pera street, opposite our ambassador's, and near the theatre, where there is a *corps de garde*. It is now an open space, where the guard is encamped within; with here and there a bit of the ruined walls left standing. It was burned down a year or two ago. Two sentinels stand at the gate, on the street, where a small marble portico, supported by slender pillars, marks its former façade.

We were next shown the ancient armoury, which is more curious in chain armour, steel skull caps, helmets, iron maces; gingles or musketoons; great two-handed swords no man could fight with, say what we will! and other offensive weapons of the middle ages.

From thence to the Sultan's collection of Greek

Digitized by Google

antiquities—a few handsome sarcophagi in marble, and, still more antique, in red granite—Egyptian?—bits of capitals of columns, and a few broken statues and torsi; some fragments of groups and foliage, showing the high perfection of the arts before their greater decline. Two of the sarcophagi, with groups in *alto relievo* (particularly one outside), very rich.

Here were parts of columns, I think from *Balbec* and *Ephesus;* and the head of the brazen serpent, from the broken bronze column, still between the two obelisks on the Hippodrome (or Atmeidan), now close to us outside.

In cases were a few lamps, vases, urns, amphoræ, small lachrymatory vessels, Greek or Roman; some in bronze.

It speaks an advance out of their dense superstitions to preserve these relics, in spite, I dare say still, of their priests, dervishes and green turbans; and yet what thousands of handsome turbaned, post-like tombs have they themselves sculptured! but not the human form, or any *created living thing.*

It was well they found *St. Sophia* ready built for them! Their own mosques are but mere copies of it; and, indeed, all their architecture is very *Indian,* but inferior. The cross is still said to be visible here and there, through the mosaic or painting in St. Sophia.

The extent of all this walled-in hill, forming the south part of Constantinople, with its pavilions, palaces,

Digitized by Google

fountains, kiosks, gardens, courts, towers, mosques, and minarets, astonishes, while it fairly tires us out to run through it.

Nothing loth, we now sally forth from the grand entrance — the *Sublime Porte*, where the heads of the viziers and pachas used to be stuck up. This gate is, indeed, grand, handsome, and lofty, with praises of the Sultan and moral sentences over the portal and on each side. On both sides of it, a handsome guard-house, comfortable ottomans and mats for the guard and sentinels on duty, with a stand of arms carefully ranged at hand.

We next pass on by a handsome pavilion fountain to the St. Sophia Mosque, first mounting by its zigzag covered way (which I thought would never cease doubling) up to its broad galleries, running round three sides of the interior. Advancing to the marble railing, we look down on the noble area of this sublime temple, where a few of the faithful, men and women, facing the East, were kneeling in prayer on the rich Turkey carpets which completely cover the whole immense space, aisles and all.

Then, up to the prodigious dome, the whole effect is surprisingly grand. No attempt at extraneous embellishment lessens this inimitable whole; for the shields, pulpits and the enormous wax candles (large as pillars), at the sides, are scarcely seen; nor, in the "dim religious

Digitized by Google

light," is there anything to distract or divide our attention.

Except St. Peter's, I have seen nothing comparable in grandeur, in the true sublime, within the reach of the hands of man.

The gilt mosaic ceiling, the noble antique columns, on all hands, arched windows, and colonnades on each side, add to the richness of effect. The breadth of these galleries I should think forty or fifty feet. At this height this breadth is astonishing, so, beneath, is the vastness of the arches and the aisles.

They were chanting prayers —a single, shrill voice, in the usual whining discord. We next descended, and, putting on our slippers, our Greeks carrying our boots, we trod the beautiful, clean (as if quite new) carpets below, each of a pattern formed to make a long quadrangle for each person, of about four feet by two, the size of a small rug.

I felt our profane curiosity an intrusion, and could well, in this frame of mind, pardon the pious fanaticism of the sons of the Prophet. To them we must seem like a troop of maniacs let loose, and led about by their keeper!

Besides, is this running about in herds, while they are absorbed in prayer, likely to give them any better idea of us or our religion? — our women too! The two ladies with us I could have wished better dressed and

Digitized by Google

better looking, since they *will* boldly stand the gaze of people who wonder at it; what signifies what *we* think? We do not—we cannot, impart our *ideas* of right and wrong, fit and unfit, to them.

I could hear some of the Turkish women we passed, as we went round, muttering something about us—I am certain not to our advantage; but none of the men seemed to notice us.

A Turk in the gallery offered a bit of the mosaic, chipped off somewhere in the mosque, for sale; after some little haggling *sotto voce* aside, my Greek got it for me. It will help at home to put me in mind of St. Sophia. By the way, a *mate* of one of our war-steamers had found his way here, and joined our party going in; but entirely against rules and our bond. Farther on, at the Tomb of *Mahmoud,* two officers of the line from Scutari got in. They were obliged to pay *bakshish* to the Turk attendants. How they all three got off with our Greek *entrepreneur* I know not, for thus joining us was infringing on his rights, unless they paid.

The outer walls leading to the platform of the St. Sophia I should think thirty feet high, and of great thickness, the outside richly traced in stucco and marble lines. Everything betokens great richness and strength. The celebrated bronze horses which once adorned this temple are, as we know, at Venice; the original doors, of bronze too, taken away by greater

Digitized by Google

barbarians, have been replaced by wooden ones. What right had Venice to them beyond that of the French? There is, however, one very beautiful Greek antique door still left.

Round the walls are large shields or medallions with great gilt names of Mahomed and his favourite saints; and at each quarter of the great dome, where intersected by smaller ones, are the mysterious figures of angels — a sort of wings — the face *hid* by a gilt star.

I am sensible how very lame all this is, and that guide books and fifty travellers have described things so much better. I do but give a first impression, as we are now hurried on.

I cannot pretend to details; — such as, that these columns, the most ancient of verde antique, are originally of *Ephesus;* those of porphyry from *Balbec;* besides the whole history of this unique pile. There is one little curious thing, perhaps, nobody notices — a common, old-fashioned, English kitchen or stair clock, stuck up against the wall — looking so diminutive as hardly to catch the eye — on the lower skirting of the basement marbles; it is a great curiosity *here.* It has long marked, I dare say, the Turkish hours of prayer to the faithful.

A singular feature of Turkish mosques are the immense wax pillars — their candles. They stand on each side certain doors or shrines; but I believe are never

Digitized by Google

lighted, if they even have a wick: small lamps and old glass lustres are suspended for the lighting up at night, not at all in keeping with the surrounding grandeur.

A priest was preaching, or expounding, from writings before him, to a semicircle of men and women under the dome (rather on one side on the floor), while a very few others were kneeling, scattered about.

From the Sophia we look in at the Tomb of Sultan Achmet (I should rather say, the mosque-like monuments over their remains, as they are all large-domed buildings of marble, with gilt characters in compartments, inside and out); but, as we were to see a finer one, we hurried on; besides, the day declined and the whole party, particularly the ladies, were getting completely fagged. Nothing is more tiring, when not tiresome, than sight-seeing; and in this one day we have to kill all the lions — enough for a month — to see things to any purpose.

We next came on the Hippodrome. The small pillar of bronze, the broken serpent, between the very ancient Egyptian obelisk, and what seems an imitation of it in brick, and in ruins, disappointed me. It is so small, and the spiral lines of the serpent so close, that it has no effect; it appears simply half a small bronze pillar without pedestal.

This Hippodrome is a bare, open, oblong square, at the north end of which we came to the mosque of

Digitized by Google

Mahomet, where the sacred pigeons are kept — the descendants of those which accompanied his flight from Mecca.

They fly about the cloistered court of this mosque in thousands. Their keeper threw a handful of corn to them near us, and the rush from all sides, through the air to the pavement, where they swarmed and piled themselves in masses on each other, was extremely curious. So tame and familiar are they, that some women, who wanted to assist at the feeding, walked among them, or rather stood, while they fluttered about over their feet. Near this the *burnt pillar* is shown — an antique column, which we only saw at a distance. So, too, previously, at a greater distance, over intervening streets and houses, when up in the Sophia, we could see parts of the ancient aqueduct, whose broken arches divide great part of modern Constantinople, and were just able to trace the outer wall and towers.

Close to this large mosque is the vast inclosure of the *Seraskier* — the minister of war; his residence, offices, barracks; and the inclosing wall very high and strong; its gates on three sides, with sentinels, &c.; in the area within three or four companies of the Imperial Guard were drilling. They stepped well together, but very slow. How much against the grain and the genius of this people are our dress and our drill! They cut but a sorry

Digitized by Google

figure in our close frock and the new red fez. A Turk without his robe and turban seems preposterous!

We next went to the grand sepulchre of the late Sultan *Mahmoud;* a fine domed building of pure white marble. (We took off our boots, and put our slippers on at all these mosques and tombs.) Inside, like that of Achmet, only much finer, are grouped the sultan's, the sultanas', and some of his children; all descending in size regularly, from the sultan's. These tombs are green, covered by cashmere shawls, with rich railings round each. On the sultan's fez, below the heron's plume, I observed a diamond *aigrette,* the same he once wore, doubtless.

I have omitted the large *Achmet* mosque near his tomb; it is plain, and only remarkable for its enormous columns supporting the dome;—larger, but not so rich as the clustered columns springing to the elliptic (pointed) arches of our cathedrals of the middle ages. These are thirty-six feet in circumference.

We finish our most fatiguing round with the large *Soleiman* mosque; remarkable as being the depôt (in the galleries) of all the trunks, boxes, bales, and worldly goods of all pilgrims to Mecca; and very odd they look, piled up as in a warehouse. Here, too, are columns of the Greek empire; indeed, most of the mosques have them, or something antique about them, within or without.

Digitized by Google

From the platform-terrace of this mosque, which is in the heart of the city, and not far from the bazaar, there is a very perfect view over the city, the waters, and the distant villages and hills far up the Bosphorus. Here we rested ourselves a little, under the shade of plane trees; then our party separated, and dispersed, most of us strangers to each other.

The slave market is close to this mosque. We passed one end of it, but missed seeing it. Here, however, there are only negroes, and there is a second slave mart near the mosque of Mahmoud, farther on in this direction. But white female slaves, Georgians, Circassians, or of Mingrelia, are sold in apartments not open exactly to the public, or to the street, and it requires some considerable trouble, at least, to see them. Strangers and *Christians* are not allowed to purchase, either black or white.

Though pretty tired, I went up a high tower within the inclosure of the war office I have mentioned, with two young Frenchmen; for we English, as usual, are wonderfully shy of each other, measuring our respective pretensions. All these towers are shut up, and the guard takes care to exact so many piastres for leave to mount; here he insisted on ten. The view from the café windows (there is always a café at the top) is magnificent, commanding a complete panoramic circle; up the Bosphorus, the Sea of Mar-

Digitized by Google

mora, the Propontis, and passage out; the snow-capped Olympian range to the south: the Golden Horn, and hills over and beyond its head, by the Valley of the Sweet Waters, with all Stamboul and its suburbs (both large cities) of Pera and Scutari; and both covering the hills and small valleys and hollows for miles. I say suburbs, for, though the Bosphorus and Golden Horn separate them, yet do they form a part of the vast whole of Constantinople; and yet, with all this immense spread, the population is not a quarter of our London one! — at most five or six hundred thousand.

They have lately sent away a great many of the lower order of the Greek population — all who were at all likely to be troublesome, or could not get Turks to answer for them, or had no assured way of earning their daily bread; amounting, it is said, to thirty thousand.

Our merchant and passage steamers have helped to carry them off, at so much a head, to Egypt, Greece, and the Islands. But what a miserable step is this, by way of precaution! To be sure the Porte has very few troops indeed left to suppress any outbreak here, and is glad to get some very rough wild subjects of Asia Minor to help. I saw several boat-loads of these fellows, *bashi-bazouks*, brought by ours and Austrian steamers, pass up the Golden Horn one day, in all sorts of Egypto-oriental dresses and arms, looking like

Digitized by Google

very *irregular* troops indeed! One would not like to be left to the tender mercies of such a set of ragamuffins — Greek, English, or French, would be all the same to these robbers by trade, if of any trade: — not unlike the Bedouins, of whom we hear very little of late years.

From day to day we may look over the waters—hear the music or muskets of our troops at Scutari, or salutes from the shipping — see arrivals and departures— and, being on the spot, should not be in total ignorance — and yet we at the hotels know little or nothing of what is going on; our embassy is as much shut to us as the Sultan's palace. We hear, indeed, that Prince Napoleon has arrived, but not the Duke of Cambridge yet. Our war movements seem to creep on very slowly. A general lethargy, à la Turk creeps over us — we stumble over the stones and mud — smoke cigars or chibouks — loll over the railing of the crowded floating bridge, or cross to the bazaars — or to see the smoking ruins of the last fire — or sit on some Turk's broken marble turban, under the melancholy cypress, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy" — but such a life becomes intolerable.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VIII.

TURKISH WOMEN IN STEAMERS.—TURKISH ECONOMY.—LODGING HOUSES.—JEWS' CEMETERY.—DOWNS.—SWEET WATERS.—IDEAL HAPPINESS.—CONSTITUTIONS.—LOCAL COMPARISONS.—ONE BANKER ONE SHOP.—BURNT STREET.—HORSES.—BURNOUSES.—CROWDED SOLITUDE.—COCKS AND HENS.—MOSLEM RULE.—IDLE VISIONS.—TURKS MYSTIFIED.—STERILE ENVIRONS.—REFORM ACT.—ODD PACHAS.—MODERN TURKISH ARMY.—COMPLICATED WAR.—DILATORY MOVEMENTS.—WATER-SIDE SCENES.—CAÏQUE FARES.—EXTENT OF PERA.—PUZZLING CURRENCY.—DELICACY OF THE CAÏQUES.—TOPHANA FERRY.—BUILD OF BOATS.

I HAVE been rambling alone about the Constantinople great bazaar, where it is very easy to be lost, impossible to recollect the complicated avenues. Their best customers, as to numbers, seem the Turkish women, who, with their ugly muslin mufflers, go about in twos and threes everywhere; and always a couple of steamer-loads of them may be seen about five o'clock at the lower bridge, going up to *Therapia, Buyukdere,* &c. These steamers return the next day.

All in all, everything worth having in the bazaar is excessively dear; nor can you guess what to offer! I

Digitized by Google

wanted a burnous and capote. For coarse things they ask four hundred and five hundred piastres, and will not take two hundred or three hundred. Here they are very scarce; but I am told better ones are sold in Egypt for sixty piastres—not ten shillings. As to attar of roses, in nothing are we more taken in; it is mere oil scented with perhaps a single drop of the real essence. Their rugs or carpets, if good, are almost as expensive as the same things in London.

Considering the want of cash, and the absolute poverty in specie of the whole community, the wonder is how these people live,—this immense bazaar and whole quarters and streets of trashy shops.

To be sure, all parties practise the most oriental economy, and *live* a month on what even an English labourer would spend in a day.

Their great people, their gentry, or their merchants at all rich, even comparatively, are very few in number; but perhaps with more followers and dependents each than we have, even with one quarter of our ordinary incomes; as all the necessaries of life (except bread and meat) are, as compared with us, as paras to pence. One may judge by this of the extortion of these Greek and French hotels, and the crew of Greeks who hang about them, getting rich on our gullibility.

You are forced to remain at a hotel, for the few Greeks who let lodgings ask a guinea a week for one small

Digitized by Google

bed-room — no attendance, no comfort, and fifty nuisances. As they speak nothing but Greek and Turkish, you cannot make them understand the commonest want till you hunt up some Greek rogue of an interpreter, who speaks just Italian, or French, or English enough to make all sorts of blunders and mistakes; or, leagued with them, he mistakes you wilfully, if it is to get your cash. This last is a very common trick. They never can understand, always *mistake* when it suits them, and then will "outswear a Turk."

I know this by experience, as, after a week at the *Hôtel d'Europe*, I took a small room at fifty francs for ten days — they would let it at nothing less as to time or cash, to be paid down; still I found it more bearable than the wretched way we live in at the hotels; though the *trattorias* are miserable feeding places; as I do not object so much to a little bad living, or indeed starvation, if not made to pay for it so unconscionably — ten and twelve shillings a day. The wine on table not drinkable; and that in bottle charged at the highest prices. One of our officers who lunched one day at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, higher up in the Pera high street, was charged eight shillings and sixpence.

There the rate is twelve shillings a day. However, these are small vexations; each of us says to

Digitized by Google

himself — well, never mind, I shall soon be off, 'tis only once in one's life, &c. We have created this kind of hotel extortion all over the world.

I have seen the famous valley of Sweet Waters at a distance, and am extremely disappointed. Good heavens what a fuss we travellers make about a trout stream and a little valley or hollow we should not deign to notice in England! We have a thousand sweet waters, a thousand times more beautiful.

Threading my way along by the water-side of Galata, and up behind the dockyard, I cross one of the many valley suburbs of Pera, through more cypress cemeteries, and opposite the third and upper bridge (over the Golden Horn) come upon the hills, where they are, like our commons, free from close streets, lanes, houses, cypress cemeteries, or execrable roads. Here are only foot-paths across, still advancing towards the head of the Golden Horn, where it turns to the north-east and receives these same sweet waters.

Descending a pretty steep rocky glen I mount the last hill, where it is covered, all its crest and side, by the grave-stones of the Jews, in slabs like ours — none upright; it looks like one immense sheet of broken marble, studded thicker even than the Turks, and quite as broken and neglected. All is open to the hills — not a cypress, not a shrub; I stepped from slab to slab for

Digitized by Google

half a mile over this hill cemetery, and down the north side of it to brick yards at the head of the Golden Horn.

There was a coffee-house crowded, to the left, and a Greek wedding or holiday, or something of that kind, going on, for there was quite a gathering of men and women sitting on the tombstones,—Greeks, and Turks, and Jews.

Another party, headed by a Greek fiddler and guitar, making a droning, monotonous noise, ambled through the crowd. They seem to have no idea of any air or melody; in short, they were making merry, very seriously, looking at each other, as at all other "fêtes." How flat and tiresome fêtes are! I sat down, too, for a moment; but the sun was descending below the western hill, at the head of the Golden Horn, gilding its opposite sides charmingly; so I advanced over the brow of this hill through its cemetery, and, lo! below me, a mile off, were the "Sweet Waters,"—that is, the stream itself, where it empties itself above the tide. I tried hard to make it out beautiful—impossible. All the valleys and hollows I had passed coming, were prettier than this; and these bare green hills, in their bold, graceful outlines, much more attractive. At Pera, one particularly feels the want of space and air,—room to breathe freely — three or four miles off on these bare downs we have it — but no cultivation; far

Digitized by Google

as the eye can stretch in the horizon over these hills, all is barren — exactly like our own commons, except that here there is no furze nor peat; but the land looks every where of a good mould, and arable with little trouble. This very bareness, with its spring-green tint, with these swelling graceful outlines into the blue distance, is beautiful; but how lamentable for a whole people!

Badly as the world is every where governed, there is always a "*deeper still.*" These Turks for one, if not outdone by the Russians farther east, who add war to all other ills.

After all, governments might be very wise and very good, without constitutions, which only shifts the same evil from one man to a swarm of lawyers. You are fleeced and oppressed by the law, and a confusion of laws.

It is sheer nonsense talking of this or any people wanting a *constitution,* even for ages still to come. With all their ills they are quite as happy, if not more so than our poor in England. I might almost include America.

Our boasted *freedom* on both sides amounts to nothing to the day labourer. Is what *we* call happiness better than theirs? I doubt it — or our taste in the upper world, or our *ways!* How much of good under Heaven is but matter of *opinion!* If we laugh, let it be still at

Digitized by Google

ourselves. We understand nothing of other nations, their feelings, nor their reasoning.

The Turks would let one alone, nor ever ask for a passport (they let me pass in the teeth of the officers and guard of the customs landing, and did not even examine my trunk), were it not for our ambassadors, and their deputies the consuls, who take care to impose this additional nuisance on one everywhere. This, from England!!! While we are chattering of freedom in the Commons, our foreign Secretary is the humble servant of all the despotisms, under the flimsy pretence that we must comply with foreign customs!

We might, and ought to shake it off; and could as easily, if indeed our government wished it, as the "dew-drop from the lion's mane."

We have books on books about Constantinople — if time stood still! — but neither morally nor physically is it at all like what it was, even fifty years ago — all is changed. Turks and Greeks and others all wear the universal red skull-cap and blue tassel, and wear their hair long or not as they please. One cannot tell a Turk from a Greek of the lower world or million, except that Greeks speak both languages. Only a few shaven heads or turbans, green or white, are seen; a still fewer mollahs or priests in their high white felt chimney-pot shaped caps.

Everybody rides on horseback or in a carriage, that

Digitized by Google

can afford it, without distinction. All religions are tolerated. I see Catholic priests and *Sœurs de Charité* frequently in the streets. We have a chapel and a burying-ground; and, in short, the Pera Christian side is nearly as large as the Turkish Byzantium, and is of more consequence, as to money spent, shops, trade, and fashion (even to Turks) than poor Stamboul!

This Pera and its suburb hills all the way (two miles) to the Sultan's Palace is their *west-end;* the *Mahmoudièh* is their Buckingham Palace. Therapia or Buyukdere may stand for Hampton Court or Windsor; and beyond Scutari, on the other side, the palace, village, and Asiatic *sweet waters* will do for Richmond.

There can be no doubt, on the whole, it has doubled itself of late years in extent, if not in population: French, Italians, above all, Greeks, form the great life of the place. The Turks are comparatively nobodies till, rising upwards, one reaches the Pachas, the cadis, and civil officers, or those who wear a fine belt and sword, in blue or brown surtouts. The police are potent, of course, and the *corps de garde,* as far as they can see; but all these influence very little the independent ways of the crowds in the streets, if I can at all judge by the great thoroughfares on both sides, almost made one by the three bridges — like London.

The first or lower bridge over the Golden Horn is always crowded. The Turks are very fond of sweets,

Digitized by Google

and trays and baskets are carried about full of such stuff as one sees at Naples — nay at home — lolly-pops, coloured sugar, &c. Then again apples and oranges are in great request — the first by weight. The Turks weigh everything — all their larger loaves are cut up and carefully weighed. I see rice is not much, if at all, eaten. There are innumerable grocers; their shops full of everything, and all with large firkins and tubs full of Russian rancid salt butter.

The English all go to one *Stampa* below the great Genoese tower (going down to Galata), who keeps the best shop — an assortment of all our wants. Hansom's bank is just above him — close by — always full of travellers, and just now English officers, for the sinews of war! And hereabouts in Galata are all the steam-boat offices. In the lower, dirty, water-side Galata street, one meets our officers and soldiers rambling about trying to make bargains — generally with some Jew or Greek, to help to get them cheated, under pretence of translating between the high contracting powers.

This, in little, is a pretty close copy of the interpreting of *Dragomen* for ambassadors! We blunder on, superciliously confident — nunky, John Bull, pays for all.

There is no great market anywhere, but innumerable small street ones. Fish is good and plentiful — even lobsters: a good large one a shilling (our shillings go

Digitized by Google

for six piastres). Eggs very fresh and good at ten paras, a half-penny. The whole of Pera is full of poultry, kept in every house-yard. The cocks make a famous crowing of a morning, and many hawks swoop about to their terror all day. This army of cocks do not crow in vain. The Turks and Greeks are very early risers — in itself a virtue, leading to many others: would it were more attended to in our cities!

I yesterday went over the bridge. Going to the bazaar I found a whole street burnt down, still smoking; it leaves hardly a wreck behind — a few were collecting anything *iron* left. I followed its whole length, without seeing a single instance of any particular visible concern or distress! and yet the owners and sufferers must have been among the crowd!

This happened last night with a high cold north wind; a great and sudden change from extreme sultry heat the day before. Most fortunate no greater spread of this calamity occurred.

I looked for a *Burnous* (the brown and gold I have seen, very elegant); but there are hardly any to be had, and at ridiculous prices: that they are to be had so easily in Egypt puzzles me. However, fearing I shall not get there, I had Hobson's choice at a Turk's, where I have been nibbling twice before; and after much talk and much bother, (an old Jew who sticks to me helped,) I got this only precious one down to two hundred

Digitized by Google

piastres (he asked three hundred and fifty at first). He yielded partly in consequence of the said Burnous being completely riddled by moth holes! but added, very seriously, that it was nothing, and could be easily darned!

From another shop I got some "*pure*" attar of roses; thawed over a lamp—first chop! mere scented oil, poor stuff. It is impossible for us to get it pure, even if it is to be had. Those little gilt long bottles sold us hold nothing, and are good for nothing. Some oil of sandal wood was better, sold by weight. The Turks have the scales in their hands for ever.

It was a bad bazaar day — the Turks' Sunday (Friday) and some Greek holiday, so half the shops were shut up.

In consequence of the demand, I conclude, for the armies here, horses are selling at preposterous prices; at least twice as much as at Tattersall's, and very inferior.

True, one sees some fine animals under Turks and Greeks, real full-blooded Arabs, but nothing like them for sale. The horses near the landing at Tophana, kept for hire, the owner running beside you all day if you like, are some of them handsome, and all very enduring and sure-footed — scrambling up and down these towns of steep hills, nimble as goats. On foot it is very wearying; of a very hot day, quite a Herculean labour! One is infallibly bathed in perspiration.

Digitized by Google

I am in utter solitude — I can bear to be alone — but this sort of life — unable to speak or understand a word — puts one in mind of our penitentiary residences or *sing sing* at New York.

To be sure I see lots of officers, in the long chief Pera street, on the bridge, or in the bazaar. They generally congregate at the *Hôtel d'Angleterre,* and in the sort of pastry-cook's opposite, but no word is exchanged. I pass like any Greek or Turk: not for the world would I address any of the Guards, Fusileer or Grenadier; perhaps the *Line* might be civil: but all are too intensely occupied with themselves to leave one any hope of claiming a countryman in chit chat, *sans cérémonie.*

The ambassador has an immense house and garden on the top of Pera, overlooking the Golden Horn, across the hill side and cemetery and distant hill suburbs I have mentioned, at the *back* of Pera. With a letter, or a title, one might have visions of an invite, a dinner, a little ordinary civility.

I have left my card, which is not even returned; and so, if I should want a little hospitality or even assistance, I will next knock at the door rather of some native moslem: — of this, or of mere indifference, I do not complain, for I make no effort: my own countrymen, officers or mere travellers, are no more unsocial than myself; but they are generally in pairs or

Digitized by Google

in a party: one cannot—I cannot, make advances: besides, our rule is to cut people spoken to abroad—and I avoid the risk—doing myself some violence—putting myself thus in training for a hermit's cell.

I have, however, made acquaintance with a Turkey, a cock, and his dozen wives—a true Turk! a pacha of one tail; he had a battle with his rival, and now keeps him in durance vile. Oh! unrelenting Turk! I feed the whole party under my window with bread crumbs; already they know my English "chick chick," though I cannot beat a word of Italian or English into the Greek servant lad here—a great partisan of Russia; as are all the Greeks! my landlady is still more densely Greek.

Poor fowls—how they bear being cooped up in a little hole of a yard—no place or stand to roost on! The hens chuckle as when pleased, and they are happy—their only annoyance and terror—the hawk! but they are too close pent for that despot. The turkey is all day making a gobbling and courting the hens, who take no sort of notice of him and his fussy manœuvres. This is my amusement—I study the whole family, and take a lesson on happiness.

If I can at all believe my own eyes, here, at Pera, and across the bridges at Constantinople, the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, exceed the Turks ten to one in numbers; most people agree that the Turks are fast

Digitized by Google

dwindling away, while the Christians are increasing much as in the rest of Europe. This whole land indeed, go where one will, proclaims from its barren wastes, its deserted and ruined villages, its very cemeteries, which still point mournfully to a former dense population, that in the midst of all varieties of bad governments of mankind, that of the Turks is the very worst.

In this large city one perhaps sees least of the peculiar misery of the great mass of poor; their oppression is most hideous over the face of the country at the distant Pachalicks.

But though they are quite unfit to govern, unfit to possess so fine a country they have contrived to turn into a barren waste, the difficulty seems to be as to who can be installed masters in their place? The Greeks themselves are too much Turks to do any better; those we have set up at Athens are not at all encouraging as a sample of this kind of change; they have gained nothing, nor their miserably managed country.

To do any real good, the great balancing powers should divide at least the European half among themselves; and let Constantinople be in our share, — a slice including the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles!

To talk of the *rights* of any government—indeed of

Digitized by Google

any one nation — has ever been, and ever will be, a mere mockery: when they cease to be masters on their own ground, there is, and there should be, an end of it. The affectation of meddling by ambassadors on paper only, while a country goes on to deeper ruin, — while a population of millions groans under a barbarous oppression, and implores some change from without, — is simply adding hypocrisy to folly; nay, a hard-hearted indifference to the sufferings of a whole people. But this is Lord Aberdeen's business, and the three Emperors, who might easily settle it any fine morning. The exodus of every Turk in Europe over to the Asiatic side, led by the Sultan himself in his state caïque, would be felt as a very great blessing; judiciously and justly managed, even by the Turks themselves; who must be tired of fluttering between hawk and buzzard, and are, I dare say, quite ready to fulfil what they already consider their *destiny*.

Just now, we must first see our way by cutting the claws of the Russian bear; take Sevastopol and the Crimea: — that insolence checked, the *high contracting* powers may do *anything* very much more easily and cheaper than sending fleets and armies to support what is, in every sense of the word, insupportable.

But people naturally ask, not for this or that man's opinion, but what are the Turks like now? What are they at? And this too has been ably answered

Digitized by Google

by recent books; and we have it fresh and fresh by a dozen "correspondents" of our daily papers. Allah Kerim! What can I say? Turkey, as he walks the streets or sits in his caïque, dresses more and more after the fashion of friend Europe, who is always taking him by the button, and bothering and boring him. He opens his half-shut eyes on steam and steamers; tries to play at geology, chemistry, and the stars; yet, Allah Acbar! comprehends nothing, and sets it down, on regaining his pipe, turban, and robe, as mere bosh! He believes in the drilling of his Tacticos, and sits patiently puzzled, listening to the earwigging and contradictory ultimatums of a colony of infidel ambassadors.

Never rightly understanding what they want of him, what they would be at; so carefully, and sublimely, and mysteriously worded are the various *notes* (the sense farther mystified in the translation) — words only meant "to conceal men's thoughts." For though he is a sad tyrant and a fool, he is still honest—honest as Othello.

No, he has not imbibed, with all our mistaken pains, one single European idea: what signifies the dressing up of sleepy officials, and an army of Tacticos ridiculously, like ourselves? It alters nothing really essential; and so far has done harm instead of good.

We must needs meddle; but we meddle at the wrong

Digitized by Google

end, and in the wrong way; as we do indeed all over the world. In a long course of years we have not made the Mussulman rulers one grain more acute, more sensible, or more just: we do but palter with his "one virtue and a thousand crimes."

But let me drop idle speculations; as I pass up along the Pera high street, I look at these same *Tactico* soldiers. Sentinels at their guard-house, standing two-and-two on their low benches (to keep their half-bare feet warm in cold weather), or I see them on parade, what few there are left (the Sultan's guard), over at the Seraskier's Square by the great tower at Constantinople. Visions of the burly departed janissaries flit before one! Who but must laugh at these apes, confined in short blue jackets and cross belts.

I turn round and behold these barren hills, close round the capital, Heaven designed as blessed kitchen-gardens, — or the mind's eye ranges to Adrianople, round the circle south to the Lebanon; all is sterile and miserable, under the iron rule of tyrant pachas. Knowing what we know, who but must grieve?

To be sure all countries have their own peculiar ideas of good, better, best; and if they only have enough to eat, it is very probable they enjoy as much happiness as the *soi-disant* more civilised nations north of them. Even up to the end of last century they were at least respectable. Europe, by injudicious meddling,

Digitized by Google

has made them contemptible; we cannot say we have done them one solitary good, of any kind whatever: and now we are their champions once more! To what end? Yes, we have contrived to make them contemptible, even in their own eyes. They no longer seem to care much about their own identity.

With their dress, customs, and quiescent routine broken in on, their religion gives way; they begin to believe in nothing, for they cease to be fanatical.

The *Tanzimaut* (a constitutional farce) places on a level in good earnest *here* in the streets, Greeks, Armenians, Turks, and Jews. Cadis and government officials must respect this recent law here, under the Sultan's unwilling nose; so, these Christian dogs gallop about on fine Arabs, wear all the colours of the rainbow, and, backed by the presence of the English and French troops (the latter at Gallipoli), nine-tenths of the population may do whatever they please — even to throwing dirt on the beards of the Osmanlis!

It is indeed often difficult to know a Turk from a Greek. To see an unsophisticated dignified tyrant of a Turk at all, one must go at least as far as *Broussa*, where may be found a good sample, though so near the seat of government, of imbecile cruelty, grasping confusion, and misrule.

Here, in the Belgravia of Pera, a troop of ambassadors and consuls, rich travellers, hundreds of mer-

Digitized by Google

chants of all nations, backed by a fleet of steamers, and loaded merchant ships, profuse tipsy sailors quite confound the native authorities, great and small. The Sultan himself seems nothing and nowhere, except going to mosque of a Friday morning. But as yesterday, pachas, particularly of any tails, up to three, were *veritable* Turks. The very name was a symbol of Mahomedanism—now, except perhaps at Aleppo,

"Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk,"—

the name means nothing: it is English, French, Austrian—any whole or half-christian thing. Have we not *Omar Pacha, Slade Pacha,* and *Walker Pacha* — our respected admiral eating white-bait dinners with their lordships, and looking after our steamers! Ask for some other Pacha, and you shall find him in white kids, in an opera stall, or dancing at a court ball!

Good English pachas of one or three tails must be very much like fish out of water — or the Rajah of Sarawak. It is a little less funny in the acting of the French or Austrian — doing less violence to their natures.

But behold the real *Reschid* or *Riza Pachas* here on the spot, armed with all the terrors of the *Sublime Porte!* and you find him a poor puppet, pulled at by all the strings of all the ambassadors, — bewildered by a thousand conflicting, confused ideas, and stealing from

Digitized by Google

painful *audiences* to the comforts of his pipe, and the consolations (in cash) of his *Armenian* banker, and farmer-general of the oppressed million.

Whether the French Pacha will hold his own at *Kars* is a question; but here are our red-coats and blue-coats on their way to help *Omar Pacha* (a *ci-devant* German sergeant) to repulse the Russians before Silistria.

Well, the Sultan's mixture of Tacticos and Baschi-bazouks have done pretty well as yet on the Danube. But it is quite impossible to think they will have any chance in a pitched battle:—against the Russians at *Oltenitza,* from behind their walls and gabions they did but hold their post at the quarantine station. The Turkish army, raw as it is still, trying against the grain to imitate European discipline and tactics, is scarcely more than the shadow of its former self.

Once they could fight, in their own old savage fashion. Those days have gone for ever; as they are, even the Egyptians scattered them like a flock of sheep. They are not to be relied on; we can only hope they will hold their own stone walls, while we push on and take *Sebastopol* and the *Crimea,* without which all our fighting and all our expended millions will be to no purpose.

We are in the field; our fleets on the waters once more after forty years' inaction, strong in our new alliance,—

Digitized by Google

cannot we profit by experience, and follow the dictates of a little common sense?

Generals and admirals should be our only diplomatists. Statesmen and ambassadors have constantly thrown away the advantages gained by our armies and our fleets—*ours* most shamefully, above all others! Witness the winding-up of our last war! stripping ourselves, and imbecilely leaguing the whole continent against us, for whose interests alone we had been fighting! *Time*, indeed, has something set this stupid blundering to rights, and given us our greatest foe as our fastest friend.

But to come more home to our present affair, what a precious imbroglio have "*Foreign Affairs*" and ambassadors brought us to at this moment!

We are at one and the same time come as friends to the few Turks, and enemies to the Greek and other Christians! who form nine tenths of the whole population, and are to a man in favour of the Emperor of Russia, and devoutly praying that we and their hard task-masters may get well licked!

It is utterly useless explaining to them that we are here to prevent the Czar and his Cossacks from overrunning the whole country, and sweeping every Mahomedan from the face of the earth! Why, that is the very thing they want! and the only possible escape from their grinding bondage.

Truly we are in an unhandsome fix! We *should* wish

Digitized by Google

to do the same thing, only more amicably — allowing the Turks still to impoverish and cruelly misgovern only the Asiatic half of their wretched subjects. Any other plan in the end will be only patching things up for a few years, to the renewed disturbance of all Europe, and our especial loss in particular.

Meantime we are in no hurry; weeks and months are lost, nobody knows or cares how. The summer is here, and the inert Osmanlis sit cross-legged smoking. Our regiments are drilled in the barrack square, and our authorities cogitate on the stiffness of stocks, and the general cut and quality of the clothing of our troops!—but not until our whole island has rung with its defects, and our daily papers have pointed at the extraordinary taste and *savoir faire* of the Horse-guards, and singular conscientiousness of our *clothing* Colonels of regiments.

Compared with Christians, the Oriental nations change but slowly in the lapse of ages; and yet much must have materially altered here at Pera and Constantinople, at least in outward appearance, since the days of Lady Mary Wortley. Nothing, perhaps, in the mind of the Turks; but in outward appliances; together with his half-and-half dress: one sees nothing but the red skull-cap and the blue tassels dangling behind. The few exceptions are among the priests, the watermen, and the Hamals (porters): many of the

Digitized by Google

Turks wear their hair long like the Greeks, nor is there any visible distinction to an unpractised eye.

In short, the old fashions of the last century are left to the priests, old fanatics, and the very lowest order of the poor — a little more prevalent at Stamboul than at Pera.

The watchmen at night, as they walk their rounds, ring their iron-shod staves on the stones, heard at a great distance in the stillness of the night. This, and an occasional "*Yangin-var*" — the alarm of fire — is relieved at daylight by the calling of the faithful to prayer from the minarets, in the same kind of nasal twang which delights in their chaunted prayers at the mosques. Indeed, the same kind of doleful cadence in the minor key is the monotonous note of all their street cries, both of Greek and Turk, and is their only music.

I sometimes go down to the landing at *Tophana*, to the police and custom-house railed-in wharf, where most of the great personages land and embark, and where official caïques and men-of-war's boats are made fast.

On the adjoining common wharf, (all of worn-out planks or piles, and tumbling down, as most of the water-side jetties and tenements are,) I take my stand among the crowd, and watch the departures and arrivals to and from *Scutari*, up the Bosphorus, or the Golden Horn. It is curious to listen to their bargaining, for

Digitized by Google

no fare is settled. I find they ask us frank *Giaours* at least quadruple what they take among themselves.

It varies for distance more than time: to Scutari, five piastres; seven or eight, if you agree to return by them; to go on board a steamer close by, from two to three piastres, or to cross to Seraglio point; to Abasiktas (the new palace), two miles up, five; or up to the top of the Golden Horn, about three miles, six piastres; but all this varies with the distances, so that there is no exact rule.

Just now there is a great demand for them by our army officers, over to the barracks, by the non-commissioned officers and servants, and numbers of the natives, men and women, who cross to have a look at our soldiers.

I find all these poor boatmen very honest, obliging, and civil; ever cheerful, easily pleased, and grateful for the least favour; indeed, the whole population is the most quiet and orderly possible; in the crowded streets, you are rarely run against rudely, or hear an uncivil word.

At the same time they are, to a man, true republicans; no child of poverty ever shows the least deference to his fellow man, more than to his donkey or his cat. If in the way, you must get out of it, and, in your turn, have to glide on without fuss; the more so, as all explanation is impossible, should you run against each other or get an awkward push.

The working part of the world, porters, watermen,

Digitized by Google

&c., are often athletic, strong fellows; with their bamboos carrying immense loads—casks and bales, slung in a clever way; when they stagger along the street under their burthen, with a hurried step, every body is glad to skip aside: however, they obligingly keep up an incessant cry to "*keep clear.*"

Pera, take it altogether, under various water-side names, stretching nearly to the top of the Golden Horn in one long, straggling hill and dale town, must be nearly as large as Constantinople was a hundred years ago; both sides have spread upwards, but this side immeasurably the most.

In all the higher and newer streets most of the wooden houses are large and handsome—their bay windows, verandahs, balconies, give them a rich, pleasing effect, at once curious and comfortable: here and there they may be fairly called picturesque and beautiful.

They have the advantage of greater comfort too in the interior over most continental stone houses,—where all is stone and brick or tile,—where you cannot rest your arm, but on some marble slab, showy, but disagreeable.

Speaking of wretched streets here only holds good as to the dirty bad pavements, or rather holes and loose stones, and the filth allowed to accumulate; and no quarter is more disgusting than round our ambas-

Digitized by Google

sador's garden wall, and along the Pera High Street, from one end to the other.

The streets have no names, or known only to the inhabitants themselves, and branch off in so many windings, lanes, alleys, and courts, that it requires some care not to get lost; then again, the whole place is one precipitous up and down hill; so steep generally as to defy any carriage, even their own queer, little, low, led things—or any riding, except on their trained sure-footed hacks.

I get a horse sometimes near the Tophana mosque, (where there is a stand of them, and their clever, active boy grooms and owners) to come up hill into Pera, perhaps three quarters of a mile, for five piastres (a franc).

The greatest bore here in our every-day concerns is the difficulty of getting any small change, paras or piastres—nobody has any—or wants more; the poorest hucksters refuse to part with their fruit or sweets, if asked to change the smallest note, and the larger shops demur at parting with their small silver; in fact, these wretched notes of ten and twenty piastres are at a discount; all the coin is alloyed, or copper silvered over: the little that is new and good, silver and copper, bearing the Sultan's autograph, is quite lost in the ordinary wants of the day; on the whole, the currency is in as wretched a state as are the state finances.

Hiring a caïque, above all, requires the exact small change; they rarely ever have any, and are puzzled

Digitized by Google

about the value of each coin! or pretend to be; something like our cunning fellows in the wherry and cab line, who never have any change — nothing new under the sun!

These caïques, by the way, are not only quite unique, but every way beautiful and good — lined throughout; the upper sides finely carved; a cross rail at the bow and stern, mostly gilt, in addition, with cushions and carpet to sit on, (the natives always take off their shoes and boots, and never step in with dirty feet, as we do); more slender and fragile than our racing boats on the Thames, these delicate things are easily broken. I stupidly split a plank jumping in yesterday, coming down rather heavy; though I am always careful to have clean feet. Poor fellow, it was but the smallest fracture; yet his face showed a deep concern, even after I had made him amends in piastres for it: I had hired him to go off to one of the steamers near the outer bridge of the Golden Horn. I felt sorry, and ashamed of the accident, for their boats are their all in all — their pets: they buy sponges to clean them most carefully with, and they are scrubbed so clean one might eat off the floor lining.

On stepping gently in, you place yourself sitting at the bottom near the stern, with your feet against the stretcher-board at his feet; this board is of the most beautiful and delicate carved work. As he pulls, the whole boat *feels* it, so slight and delicate are all its parts.

Digitized by Google

The oars work in neat rope rings, or grummets, over slender brass or iron pins on the gunwale: they carefully grease the part which plays at the fulcrum of the oars, or rather sculls, which are extremely light and slender; not half the weight of our watermen's, with a scientific swell near the handle balancing the longer end and blade: on the whole, were these boats wider, they would be perfect,—a pattern for the jolly *Water Lily's* crew to follow! *—as it is, they will bear a good deal of heeling over, and carry quite as much as a small wherry: sometimes eight or nine people get into them, close packed in the one spot at the bottom, crossing the frequently rough stream to Scutari:—at ten and twenty paras a-piece.

I often watch their filling at the wharf I have mentioned, at Tophana, with stray passengers, till their number is completed, not putting off till the full number are seated: to this end there is much bawling, and coaxing, and bargaining: "now then, only two more—only one more"—"*Bir adam, iki adam!*" Nobody ever sits on the raised part in the bow, or at the stern, or

* Because they are *flatter floor'd*, skimming on the top of the water. The Pacific canoes, round to the Chinese sanpans and fishing boats, should teach us this lesson. We build to plunge under water, without bearings or buoyancy: from a racing gig to a steam or sailing frigate, all are too narrow and too deep; not carrying their guns high enough out of the water, while their keels are too far by half under water.

Digitized by Google

very rarely a boy or child of little weight: all trunks or packages are put in the bottom, behind the rower, a little before the centre of the boat.

But no matter what the crowd, what the hurry, whether of passengers or luggage, all is done with the nicest, gentlest management; indeed, it is quite essential; while you get in the waterman steadies his caïque with his sculls, or holds by the wharf or the next boat.

Landing they always turn and push in stern foremost, as it is impossible, on rising from your seat, to pass the waterman before you; or if you could, the chances are a heavy man would break in the gunwale, or split the thin lining of the ribs or the carve work somewhere. *Apropos* of the little *Water Lily* (and her admirable "*log!*") up the Rhine and down the Danube. They need still less have feared the rapids at the *iron bridge*, had their builder given her more beam.

What can be more helpless or absurd than those racing sculling boats we see our *verdant greens* painfully pulling about the Thames; at Eton, the *Isis*, or the *Cherwell*!—with not enough of *topsides* to keep out the mere ripple of the river,—so narrow they dare not stir,—so low in the water they are obliged to have iron outriggers or rowlocks! The whole thing, from first to last, useless, childish, and contemptible. Truly we have *much* to learn from pure, poor, savages,—something from the Turks!

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IX.

PERA'S HILLS AND OUTLETS.— DERVISHES' KIOSK.— BURNT TREE.— BIRDS'-EYE VIEW. — CONSOLATORY COMPARISONS. — PASSAGES HOMEWARDS. — QUEER VOLUNTEERS. — LETTERS ESSENTIAL. — WAY UP TO PERA. — TURKISH TRAITS. — DETAILS OF PERA. — A LOBSTER BARGAIN. — GREEK AND TURKISH WOMEN. — AUSTRIAN BALL. — TASTE IN MUSIC. — PERA THE WEST END. — NATIONAL GARBS.—WOMEN WITH OUR ARMY. — PLEASANT COMPANIONS. — NOTHING KNOWN. — SCANTY SUPPLIES.— LANDSCAPE ATTRACTIONS. — SILLY CURIOSITY. — HOT SUN, COLD WINDS. — TREACHEROUS KINDNESS. — QUIT STAMBOUL.— CONFUSION AT STARTING.—HADJIS' RECEPTION.— SALT-WATER AMENITY.— CONSULAR FORTS.— CALL AT SMYRNA. — LOOK OF THE TOWN.— IMPERATIVE BACKSHISH.—SELF-EXILED LADIES.

ALTHOUGH Pera is a congeries of hills, one can rarely get a peep either over the Bosphorus or the Golden Horn—so rare are the openings, so narrow and closely packed the streets. The only one I could find lies on the right hand, passing upwards from Galata, a little above the great Genoese tower, where a corner of the great Pera cemetery and cypress grove comes in on the main street. Here there is a mausoleum and graveyard of dancing dervishes, an endowed kiosk and fountain, and a kind of "*morgue.*" Under the marble arch here, leading out on the hill side, you come across the

Digitized by Google

paved court and fountain, on a terrace which commands a fine view over the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn (as far as the first bridge), the Sea of Marmora, the Propontis, the islands and distant Asiatic mountains.

To this open terrace, and its melancholy fine old burnt plane tree (its charred black trunk carefully inclosed) I make my way to get at the pure heavens' open air, and revel in the magnificent view stretching to the south, as far as the snowy Olympian range over *Brousa*. The mouths of the Bosphorus and Golden Horn are covered with steamers, merchant-men, troop and store-ships — just now but one man-of-war, a Turkish frigate, lying opposite the *Mahmoudièh* Palace.

All this floating show is foreign to the scene:—little or nothing enlivens these useful and beautiful waters larger than the caïques and a few lumber barges, if I except a few small sloop coasters, of the clumsiest rig and sails it is well possible to contrive. The cleverness of the Turks afloat seems all concentred in their caïques.

Here, looking down on the roofs of the houses below, and small walled-in gardens (we never suspect from the streets), seated on some one of the ruined walls of houses burned years ago, I find an agreeable relief from my Greek lodging-house prison — my silent utter loneliness.

By the bye, I should say a word of Greek houses and

Digitized by Google

lodgings. As a great favour, I got the only room left, as they said, in all Pera,—and at a most exorbitant price,—a single small room (but carpeted and comfortable), at twenty-five shillings a week,—not a word to be heard but Greek. My landlady and several children on the ground floor of two small rooms and a kitchen; with two square feet of boarded-in yard at the back, in which her poultry can hardly stir; but where, poor things, they contrive to make themselves half happy in the wet and dirt. As I throw them crumbs out of my window, they take some interest in me, and I am quite as grateful as they are.

In all sorts of miseries one may draw some consolation from the greater wretchedness of others, and bless our stars we are not in the "*deeper still.*" Here is a young Greek of Athens, in the room over mine, at the point of death. He has been confined to his bed by some incomprehensible malady for these two years.

And these poor chickens! what have they done that not only are they doomed to slaughter, but they must endure their short lives, deprived of their wings, their liberty, their natural food—even of a perch to roost on! Surely man is the most good-for-nothing, hard-hearted animal in creation; indeed, in fact, the only cruel one!

Tigers, hyænas, rattlesnakes, wolves, do but obey a wisely implanted instinct—it is nonsense to talk of *their*

Digitized by Google

cruelty—ours is the only hideous real thing; inflicted wantonly on all created living nature round us, and on each other!

But a truce to moralising. I am but too glad of any excuse to myself for cutting short this irksome, solitary, vegetating kind of life. I find there is an immensely long screw steamer come in from Liverpool—last from Gallipoli, where they landed their stores, and just now, across from the barracks at Scutari, where they landed some fifty horses. She goes home by the way of Smyrna and Alexandria.

The Austrian Lloyds and French steamers touch at Athens, and so up the Adriatic to Trieste, or by Malta to Marseilles: the fare, thirteen pounds to Trieste, and twenty pounds to Marseilles, meals not included; whereas our screw steamers charge but twenty pounds to Liverpool, table and all; any part of the way equally reasonable—to Smyrna only two pounds, Alexandria six pounds, Malta eight pounds; and, except to those who have acquired a French taste, a better table.

There is another great advantage in our merchant or freight screw steamers, in their remaining some days at each port they touch at—long enough to give you some general idea of the place, without risking the chance of the next steamer being, perhaps, crowded to excess, and leaving you in durance vile; something in the same way I find it here—for to remain on this

Digitized by Google

lonely, know-nothing and nobody-footing any longer is impossible.

Let no man come abroad without letters — to his ambassador, by all means; but to somebody is really imperative, if one makes the least stay.

I am naturally social, if there is the least opening; but all the people I meet are in families or hunt in pairs. You may exchange common-place civilities at the hotel table, but you remain strangers; as they are entirely taken up with themselves — for even here there is some excuse for being shy of strange faces. There are so many queer British subjects just now here as adventurers. The steamers, the hotels, the cafés, are full of them. In this way there was no want of sociable companions. I tried it in one or two instances; but not only the talk and intelligence of these wandering individuals did not repay me, but their own stories of themselves and of each other were so excessively *queer*, so very suspicious, that I found it necessary to keep them at a distance. One of these young men, with a revolver which threatened to shoot backwards on its owner, was on his way to join the French General Pacha commanding at Kars — as a volunteer! not knowing whether the pacha would have him or not!

Another of these loose fish meant, when on his last legs, to join some Turkish corps as officer, without one word of Turkish, or any one requisite for command.

Digitized by Google

He was quite surprised to find us English in no particular demand for the army, either at Silistria or Varna; and that, even if recommended for employ, a rigid examination had to be gone through.

As to our own officers with the army, at the hotels, and at the pastry-cooks in the High Street, Pera, opposite the *Hotel d'Angleterre*, over from Scutari for the day, they were so occupied with themselves — had so much to think of, from the novelty of their situation, — so taken up in the crowd with eating ices, that though I exchanged a civil word with two or three, it led to nothing. One must possess youth — above all, youth, and buoyancy, and light-heartedness, to make advances, or sustain the cool indifference of the world — with reciprocal *sang froid* and composure.

Coming up the streets from the landing at Tophana, there is a small mosque to the left, where there are a kind of bazaar stands or counters, under the arcades — I conclude of the faithful, as turbans prevail. Then we pass a row of apple and pear stands in the street; then a market. Crossing this last, the rise is rapid, and pipe-bowl makers are seen on both sides, with their brown clay bowls in the first stage of drying in the sun; then shops of cherry-sticks, manufacturing to match. Then heterogeneous shops (all open to the street, and the Turks squatted at work,) of all sorts of second-hand things — *omnium gatherums*, like our own

Digitized by Google

"*marine stores*" — the lots rather more clean indeed. I have been bargaining with an old Turk for a white and red leather halter, to strap my burnous up with. He leaves his shop very often to smoke a pipe at a café a hundred yards off; no fear of any body robbing him, though so easily done. They have not come to our refinement yet. He was evidently poor, yet wonderfully indifferent about selling me the halter!

The High Street, Galata, is full of deal chest-makers, clumsy solid things, a load in themselves — all on one invariable pattern, without paint, simply planed smooth.

Wearisome as the time passes these last three weeks, yet does it seem all too short — as now, at the last moment, I begin to think of the many obscure, ordinary things to be seen and known, not yet touched on by any body; for, after all, we know very little of the real sense, or feeling, or ideas, or notions of the Oriental or any foreign nations. We go on writing to each other — we try to amuse, and try to convince, but we only deceive each other. After all, most assuredly we are as wide of the mark as a certain General Pillet, when, some fifty years ago, he described and finely abused England and every thing in it, to the great edification of the whole reading French nation. If we could only find out, and did but understand each nation's train of thought and train of reasoning!

If elephants and lions or eagles could write travels

Digitized by Google

and histories, what fine fellows they would be, and how very small we should look! At all times, and at this moment, the two belligerents are both proclaiming victories after every battle or skirmish! — and there is no truth in us.

My most frequent walk was backwards and forwards in that one interminable Pera Street, which runs from the lower bridge on the Golden Horn, up through Galata, up a steep hill (almost an angle of forty-five, like most of the other streets all about and everywhere in this city of steep hills) — then, close to the *Genoese* tower, by the Dervish's kiosk and burnt tree terrace of the fine view; on, on, within sight of our ambassador's gate, and the portal of the burnt Polytechnic School, to the right, and Greek café and theatre to the left, almost a mile out (still rising) to the Armenian and old English burying-grounds, which lie together very lovingly near the Artillery Barracks — and a café beyond on the top and brow of the hill, at last, looking down over other barracks far below, *Dolma-bakshi*, and the new palace of the Sultan on the shore of the Bosphorus I have mentioned before.

I had plenty of time for meditation and observation: can I say anything new of these same Greeks of to-day? Not a word; I leave them quite as ignorant as I came, for not one word can I understand.

Except the fellows who hang about the hotels, who

Digitized by Google

talk a gibberish of Italian, French, and English — (at once amusing and provoking, for everything turns out a mistake!)—not a soul in all this bee-hive speaks anything but Greek and Turkish. Of course just as if an unhappy Turk were in lodgings in some one of our labyrinths of streets in Lambeth, innocent of English; just as our good people would smile, and nod, and wink, and turn up their eyes at the said forlorn Greek or Turk, so did the Greeks and Turks at me.

I longed much to have a friend at the embassy,—where I spoke to the porter on two or three occasions, once leaving my card; and, had I persevered, might perhaps have been allowed, as a personal favour between us, to have a peep at its walled-in paddock or garden, or studied its outward and very gigantic proportions. But the fates always drove me through the mud or dust down hill, along the cypress cemetery at the back of it, or along the overhanging back streets on the other side, where I picked up nothing,—except, one day, a lobster in the street fish market; which was within an ace of bringing me acquainted with the stout bold Turk fishmonger and his man Friday, as we consulted by nods and winks, and "*yoks*" and "*evets*" (yeses and noes), as to the important matter of changing a ten-piastre note — he to take five for said lobster, or tenpence. The difficulty was, how he was to part with tenpence change. He looked at the lobster and the

Digitized by Google

bank note alternately, sorely perplexed; twice was he on the point of consigning his shell fish to its basket; and, in truth, these notes are sad trash—everywhere taken with reluctance: but I trifle.

What of the inhabitants? I don't know. The Greek women seem fond of lolling out of their windows by the hour looking at nothing in the streets,— or they dress up and visit each other in the mornings. They seem very vivacious, and on the whole prettier and fairer than the Turkish women one meets in the streets; at any rate, who all appeared to me, young and old, very sallow, and very plain: but their *yak mash* over the eyes and nose is horrid, giving them the appearance of turned-up noses, as this lower bit of white cloth or muslin stretches tight across under it.

The richer Greek and Turkish women are constantly met in their one-horse, odd, shallow carriages in the streets, piled on one another, painfully dragged about and jolted over the cruel stones,— the horse led by their Greek or Turk groom; while those who can't afford this torturing luxury are met everywhere in the streets, and bazaars, and shops, quite as fond of shopping and gossipping as our own ladies: but then it is always by themselves; if a man is ever seen with them it must be some slave, or among the higher Greeks, who dress and affect Paris or London fashions,— and these are comparatively few.

Digitized by Google

They, however, form the connecting link at the embassies between the pure European strangers and the natives; so that when balls or great parties are given by the ambassadors, and they are not infrequent, the rooms are filled by these Greek ladies, with a sprinkling of English, French, Austrian, &c.

The Austrian ambassador gave a ball the other night: some of our hotel young men and officers were invited, and talked next morning of the Greek beauties they had danced with. I, too, had a "sleeping partner's" share in this pleasure, while in bed, listening to the music; the sweet sounds wafted fitfully up the hill by the night breeze; — as the sun rose, gilding all the masses of roofs, mosques, and minarets, still was it kept up,—"we won't go home till morning,"—"that dying strain!"

They have very good bands, mixed Italian, French, and Greek; all the more pleasing when heard occasionally, in contrast to the native lugubrious droning noise, which alone delights the pure Turk and Greek. One wonders at such ears; why — change but the name, and we find the same thing among ourselves, or the French or Italians. When the untrained taste of the people is wholly at variance with the cultivated taste of the few, what signifies who is right?

Are not three parts of most *operas* people of fashion

Digitized by Google

sit out, a positive infliction, in sound and sense; unmeaning chords, and noise, and nonsense.

Why not as well listen to a Calabrian bagpipe, or a Scotch! or be in raptures at the *ranz de vaches* of the Swiss!

The Greeks and Turks of the present day, taken as a whole, strike me as smaller than ourselves — but a handsome race, well turned limbs, and regular features; but dress changes the look of men and women very much. I wish, however, the men had stuck more to their own; and surely the women do well not to adopt the refined, and most unnatural, unhealthy, ungraceful *corsets* of northern Europe.

Apropos of dress, we English swagger through these streets in jim-crows and tweeds, in every variety of fantastic cut and shape, "motley's your only wear;" our faces are covered with hair, just found out! while our officers, by way of startling contrast to the very loose garments of their idle countrymen, are done up in the least possible quantity of scarlet and grey cloth — so tight that one dreads the threatened bursting! I am convinced the Turks must mutter inwardly an Allah, Allah, Inshallah!—God is great!—as they sleepily contemplate our motley groups passing their coffee-houses, where they sit smoking, in a quiet easy state of beatitude, perhaps philosophising on this wonderful inroad

Digitized by Google

of friendly, northern, barbarian, Christian dogs! come to keep off the Russian wolves!

One might attempt a faint moral comparison between this and London. Constantinople itself may be called the *city: St. Sophia,* its *St. Paul's:* and its silent, lonely walled-in seraglio, its *Tower:* while Pera flaunts it as Belgravia and our West End,— for here are seen all the great, the rich, the fashionable; the last distinction a thing still strange and exotic.

Here most money is spent,— the whole European world,— shipping, army, navy, travellers, ambassadors, princes, generals, and, lastly, the Sultan himself, all keep, and circulate on this side.

The floating bridge over the Golden Horn, to be sure, is always crowded by all the world crossing and recrossing,— but it is among the high and mighty only to *visit* the city, as in London proper. They *live* at Pera, or up along its Bosphorus suburbs, sprinkled near the water above and below the Sultan's new and old palaces.

Pera itself, in its many abrupt hills and hollows, contains many fine houses and gardens of the rich Greeks and Turks — those of the European ambassadors conspicuous. The Russian, which is of the largest, looks chop-fallen,— its gate on the Pera High Street above it, fast locked.

I pathetically lament not having a *Murray:* I never

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE OUTER FLOATING BRIDGE OVER THE GOLDEN HORN.

Digitized by Google

see a book,— rarely an English paper, which is imperative, if only to know what we are about in this land and these waters—Allah Akbar! who knows? who can tell? Perhaps my Lord of Redcliffe; but he has the gout, and is besides hermetically sealed up. The embassy is tabooed, sacred to private friendship, and the *haute volée*. It is wonderful what virtues, and good fellows, are found in private, unknown to *outer barbarians!*

I sometimes run down to the *Tophana* wooden wharves,— squat myself in a caïque (there is a good regulation among themselves to prevent any one of them having an undue share of fares, — each in his turn,) and cross to the barracks at *Scutari* to look at our fellows drilling, in a grilling sun, in the square, of a morning; or prolong my walk to the tents of the Highlanders on the plain beyond; *their* dress is at least graceful,— one is not ashamed of it: but what stuck pigs in their brick-coloured baize, collars, and senseless bracings, are the great body of our poor soldiers!

I return by the great cemetery I have mentioned, (a dark forest of cypress,) down the steep streets of *Scutari*, opposite *Leander's Tower;* then turn back along the shore streets, and by the hill-side regain the barrack landing, which is a mile from the centre of the town, indeed more, — for Scutari ranges interminably along the shore, upwards, in the same way as Pera opposite.

Digitized by Google

Sometimes I watch the poor frightened cavalry horses being landed from the screw steamers; how many die, how many are killed! Here is a fine hunter, worth a hundred and fifty guineas, floating about dead under the bows of the caïques,— they broke his back landing.

Close by are knots of fatigue parties piling baggage and luggage on the bullock waggons.

Our army is hampered and crushed by loads of useless baggage, truly *impedimenta!* — twenty women to a regiment! What business have they with twenty, or one, on such an errand? The French come more sensibly near the mark, with but one jolly *vivandière,* and she is in half uniform, and is wholly a soldier.

Meantime steamers arrive full of troops from day to day, and the men are landed; all these large troop or horse steamers lying on the Scutari side by the barracks.

To-day the bands of those in barracks were playing to them in their march up the hill, nothing loth to welcome their newly arrived comrades in arms.

Sir De Lacy Evans is lodged in or near the barracks, the two Princes in villas of the Sultan's, I think, just above his own palace (the Mahmoudièh) on the Bosphorus; that is, about two miles above Tophana, and in the eastern outskirts of the *Abasiktas* village.

But all these shores are a string of villages and

Digitized by Google

houses at the water-side, for some six or seven miles upwards; indeed, as far as Therapia, the shores are full of villages and villas.

Nothing transpires as to the movements of the army, French or English; only it is whispered they are waiting for ammunition! which, by some strange neglect or oversight, has been left behind. This may account for the paucity of field days.

It is impossible to guess at much of what is going on in the camp or the council at Gallipoli,— but maugre awkward reports trust that the troops at length shake down smoothly with the inhabitants.

In spite of their dress, there is great satisfaction in seeing the strapping figures of our Guards, and the handsome picturesque appearance of our Highlanders, placed suddenly before the eyes of these Turks, Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. A good many are always looking on, on the plain which skirts the great Scutari cemetery (the largest in the world one would think!), and in at the barrack gates.

Our petty officers are allowed to cross in parties daily to the city on leave; they land on the bridge mostly, turn to the right for Galata and Pera, or cross at once for the bazaar at Stamboul,— there is nowhere else to go.

Some few of the corporals and the sergeants are taken by the Turks for the superior officers of the

Digitized by Google

army—so much more showy, compared with their own officers; dressed in their miserable, short, scanty, tight shell jackets: —no wonder!

I explained to one party of Turks on the bridge, and corrected so far the mistake.

There is now one of the Sultan's small passage-steamers to attend on the army; it crosses every hour to and from the bridge to the barracks.

To-day, middle of May, there is some "*on dit*" of a forward move towards the Euxine,—whether to *Varna*, or what other point, time will tell; but if they wait either for horses or ammunition, of course the day cannot be fixed.

Meantime we know nothing of what is passing on the Danube,—an *on dit* that the Russians are bombarding *Silistria;* but these vague uncertain "*it is saids*" are good for nothing. Another report came a few days ago that we had two or three of Sir Charles's fleet sunk before Cronstadt! which, at any rate, I *won't* believe,—indeed, to know anything certain at Pera, it must come all the way from home, in the shape of the *Times* ten days old, or *Galignani*—the last date 30th April.

One thing is certain, say what we may,—gather all men's opinions,—it is certain never was there a war involving so many conflicting interests, hopes and fears,—in which so little is to be gained, and so much

Digitized by Google

very probably lost,—or such a tangled skein of opposing facts to disentangle; — the worst confusion arising from the hostile interference of the Greeks, and the conflicting hesitations of Austria and Prussia; which nor France nor ourselves can much blame, however provoking; to put down the Greeks with a strong hand would only add to existing difficulties, delicacies, and imbroglios.

Then, again, the terrible fact of this sad year of bad harvests. No grain left anywhere; exports stopped; imports none; and perhaps not ten days' bread in store in Constantinople!

Bread is very dear now, dearer than in London, I have no doubt; for I pay a penny, or half a piastre, for a very small slice cut, and exactly weighed, from their small brown loaves. This is my mite for dogs *en passant*, and my cocks and hens. The scarcity is general, and accounts too for the half-starved appearance of the donkeys, labouring under their heterogeneous loads of planks, earth, lime, and stones, up these steep streets.

I am unhappily too old for fiction, or for much enthusiasm in anything; even Albert Smith is now and then more romantic than myself; for I cannot be so often in raptures about things here, which I think and feel far exceeded in our own dear isle! What are all the hills, houses, valleys, and *sweet waters* here, compared to our

Digitized by Google

own lawns, streams, villas, and valleys! The China orange to all Lombard Street.

We may and do wish perhaps for a Bosphorus, or six or eight miles of it, both sides, to prolong our own dear ill-used Thames below Gravesend; and what a heaven we should make of these hills and dells, compared with the mode, and manner, and appearance, which contents here!

About taste there is no arguing; the Turks and Greeks are happy in their own way, we in ours; and it may be conceded that their domes and minarets are prettier objects in the distance than our heavier sameness of straight lines:—even their wooden houses are as large, and more picturesque, than our villas: but leave this distant view, and enter the gates, or the rooms, the gardens; and this novel, vague, grand, undefined charm is dispelled.

Again, we cannot for ever enjoy fine views, we want repose; nay, the quiet of a plain green lawn, and the round shade of our elms and oaks. If we do not economise these bursts of enthusiastic delight, they would soon be worn out. Smith's or other people's "*breath* being *taken away*," &c., seems to me all *bosh*, exactly that "Ercles' vein" he laughs at in more stilted writers, and very justly.

There can be no doubt all our writers on the East insensibly exaggerate when trying to impress on their

Digitized by Google

readers their sensations about this or that city, or tract of country, or combination of land and sea.

Distant rocky mountains edged with snow, and the blue sea, delight us by contrast with our own lower shores and more confined view; but we enjoy these distant generalities but for a moment; we soon seek our kindred lawns, our cultivated valleys, our exquisite neatness, and grace, and comfort combined; looked for in vain near the eye here,— nothing here "comes home to our business or our bosoms."

For my part, I only covet a slice of this land and sea brought home to diversify our own, but would not exchange it for a world of distant minarets and mountains, or wild, neglected plains.

Setting aside the intolerable heats of summer, the mud, and dust and dirt — the want of interchange of ideas, too, rendering life one long miserable blank — for even to speak or comprehend a language by halves very little helps the matter.

We may truly say we have no business here, where we are certainly taken for a queer mixture of fools and madmen! While the Turks prostrate themselves to God, we invade their sacred temples, grinning, chattering, staring, as if we reverenced nothing. While the Greeks, Jews, and Armenians cunningly hoard riches, — live on an excessive economy,— are happy, even in poverty, — we come to show them how to squander,

Digitized by Google

ask foolish questions, do silly things without meaning, or pleasure, or profit.

As at Gibraltar there is a constant swift current sweeping into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic, so here, at the Bosphorus, the current sets strongly from the Black Sea westward into it too, along the Sea of Marmora and through the Dardanelles.

Nothing but a leading wind and a strong breeze can master it. No wonder sailing vessels are often delayed for weeks going eastward, either to Constantinople, up the Dardanelles, or, being there, up the Bosphorus into the Black Sea. Our steamers must have been very essential to tow those of our fleet not fitted with screws. It may too well account for any delay occasionally getting into the Euxine, from whence the strongest breezes generally blow, and bring a piercing cold with them in winter — in summer the coolest airs. It is even now, with a fiercely hot sun, icy cold in the shade and wind, when it is from the east and north-east, just as it is with ourselves.

In short, these winds reach the Mediterranean, as they do England, across the steppes of Russia from the icy regions of Siberia. Thus, too, the winters are so cold at Constantinople, crossing the flat Crimea and sweeping across the Euxine, south of the Balkan chain of mountains.

But I must attend to my own small concerns. I

Digitized by Google

look up my Greek *George*, who gets a porter (and his clumsy pad between the shoulders, on which they pile every thing — it is in advance of our London porters, however): we venture to load him, after two full days' notice at the ambassador's of my intended exit, when the porter sends me off to the Consulate, where they kindly tried to hamper me with a special pass to the Turkish police office (poor mystified travellers and Turks!),—not in the least essential, except to shell me out a couple of francs; I smilingly and politely thanked the demi-semi-consular embassy *attaché* (the embassy send all their small work to the consuls, not to be troubled by England's *Oi-polloi*). He had just confessed in friendly converse how egregiously vexatious all these passport trammels were, while he was stamping this very gratuitous paper link in the long chain of fleecing contrivances we trot abroad under. I put it in my pocket as a curiosity, and wish I could, without too much trouble, put it here. Off we went to my steamer, under the noses of the police and custom, and no questions asked; nor ever would, but for this embassy-consular-red-tape officiousness.

As we approached the vessel, *George* advised giving three or four piastres to a scarlet custom-house Turk ensconced in his *caïque* alongside, who, after scratching a hole in my pipe cover to see — if it was cherry-stick? —let us get on board.

Digitized by Google

And now adieu Byzantium! good-bye, a long good-bye to pointed mosques, minarets, and cypress cemeteries! I shall never more see such streets, such houses, such shops and bazaars. I like their quiet, smoking, contented barbarity. They certainly *enjoy* more than we black-hatted, coat-snippited, highly civilised *giaours* do. I will back any Effendi and his lady any twenty-four do-nothing-hours against any of our most fastidious Carlton Gardens couple, and give them the entré of the Palace, Almacks, and the opera into the bargain! We run about our own and other lands, and are seldom pleased above a few minutes at a time; but are we more alive to the sublime and beautiful? How do we know! We are certainly much more trifling, restless, vicious, and discontented. Steam and *minié* guns, and paixhans, and railroads, and geology and chemistry — all — all do nothing for us as to happiness, and enjoyment, and *content!* We mustn't laugh too loud. I think the *Turks* have the best of it, by having nothing of what we boast.

Nowhere are steamers more welcome, indeed necessary, than up these seas, and among these innumerable islands; where contrary currents and baffling winds or calms often spin out a sailing vessel's passage for weeks.

We repass the Sea of Marmora during the night, and the Dardanelles next day. The shores looking a little, and but a little, greener than three weeks ago;

Digitized by Google

and so a last look at Turk and Greek; to much strange good, ill understood; to much evil, real and imaginary; to fine distances, dirty streets, discomfort, and lonely vacuity!

A ship, like a house, always partakes of the neglect or the botheration of its head. I find on getting on the quarter-deck of my steamer, when they should be all clear, cargo stowed, and men at the crank for weighing, that all is confusion worse confounded; hoisting in bales at the bows, and chromate of iron handing in in baskets by the natives astern. To make matters worse, passengers' luggage blocks the way; and nobody is appointed either to look after it, or direct what is to be done with it. Both sides of the vessel crowded with boats and people, begging and praying for an answer, for help to get their things up the ship's side; others bawling to and at each other; above all this din the mates are heard;—not to put anything to rights, however. The captain is a great man, and sips his wine at lunch, ignoring the hurly-burly on deck. Next come off five-and-twenty well-dressed Turks, Hadjis going to the tomb of their Prophet. The captain and mates set their faces against them, and make these poor men feel it in many ways totally gratuitous. Nobody speaks a word of their language; they get on deck, and their bags, chibouks, pots, and pans, prayer-carpets, &c. as they best can; few and simple enough their wants:

Digitized by Google

nobody will show them where to go; they come on the quarter-deck, and are rudely driven off. They go patiently on the horse-boxes; spread their mats, and prostrate themselves in prayer wherever they can find some little spot unoccupied.

But what idea must these people have of us! of our petty pride, our petty distinctions! The agent at the office on shore telling them nothing about what is expected of deck passengers! How can they conceive such miserable money distinctions!

Well might I suffer for these poor people and for myself, to witness such obtuse illiberality. I had a brush with the mate (I found him afterwards, a rather enlightened and good-hearted fellow) about my own luggage, as he seemed disposed to carry everything with a high hand, quite above passengers' unhappy trunks. I think among the cargo, we took in forty tons of hazle nuts. At length when nearly dark, and we had lost all chance of seeing anything of the Sea of Marmora, the islands, the Propontis, or shores anywhere, we weighed and screwed away to the westward; and passing Gallipoli, enter the Dardanelles early the next morning.

I feel more sorry to quit my poor cocks and hens which I fed under my window, than anything else in diplomatic Pera. They alone, and a poor dog or two, will miss me!

Digitized by Google

My sympathies are now wound up with these Hadji Turks going to Alexandria on board. They have put their things in the horse-boxes; but they are driven about brutally, with scarce a spot to spread their mats to say their prayers. Can we wonder at being hated and despised—and perhaps repaid with interest, when we are caught wandering towards Mecca?

But independent of this ill-natured, ignorant contempt, shown by pushing, even by kicks, if they get in the way of any of these sea-swabbers, each and all inferior to these men they affect to despise so much. How wrong, how impolitic, this detestable inhospitable carriage towards Mussulmen; as prone as themselves, good christians, only to judge from the feelings of the moment: whose very religion teaches them to think us a very inferior set of animals—Christian dogs! And here are these very Christian dogs treating them like felons more than respectable men, strangers, and passengers, who have paid for their passage; going on a pious errand to the Tomb of their Prophet!

I observe, however, that all this is the captain's fault, quite as much as the obtuse nature of his mates and men. They all forsooth hate Turks. The captain "doesn't want them," but the owners, his masters, order them a passage: so his ill-humour is visited on these patient, inoffensive pilgrims.

They have behaved, under very trying circumstances,

Digitized by Google

with infinite good-humour, and astonishing patience (their arms all taken from them I find); when I fully expected they would in a body have resented their ill-treatment; that is, being rudely pushed, even kicked off the quarter-deck, as they are *deck* passengers, having no place assigned them: even the surly cook at first driving them away from the only fire! and not allowing them to light their pipes — besides constantly wetting the deck about where they nestled themselves, hoping for some little dry spot! and all this without one word of gentleness or explanation!

I do what I can to soften it; but the best thing for them is, that it will only last a couple of days, — at which we all say, Inshallah!

I think I have mentioned the forts about half way through the Dardanelles facing each other, where all vessels are obliged to bring to, and obtain a pass to proceed. Now all this fuss, loss of time, and extra trouble, expense, and vexation, might be swept off in a day, if our *Foreign Affairs* chose it. Instead of which, here we have a consul with a fine house he has built on the Asiatic side at the water's edge, to countenance and enforce all this drag-chain to commercial activity.

The Turks will do whatever we please, particularly at a moment like this; but we ourselves hamper and annoy our own merchants. Indeed, Downing Street, as

Digitized by Google

in the barbarous ages, is still the enemy of our Thames Street; — consuls and custom-houses do their worst, and rather prey on than help the exertions and enterprise of the commercial world.

Repassing the plains of Troy and Tenedos, we thread these shores on to Smyrna; passing a great many small islands, and ranging along the eastern shores of Mitylene—where, towards its south end, we see many pretty spots; its mountains rich in rocky ravines,—and what constitutes the beauty in shifting lights and shades of distant scenery.

The second night we run into the deep bay of Smyrna; keeping under the high land on the eastern side, to avoid the shoals which lie off the low white castle fort three or four miles outside the anchorage.

The shipping is anchored close to the town. We find some two dozen merchant-men—a Dutch, and Sardinian frigate; and the American frigate *Cumberland*, with the Commodore's pendant, and his attendant war steamer, the *Saranac*.

Smyrna disappoints me; after Constantinople, one misses the rich effect of her wooden houses — here we have more stone, and all is less picturesque: one endless street runs along the face of the town, cut off from the water side, however, by masses of houses, which are passed through from the water side by lanes and courts, and passages, closed occasionally by gates and doors.

Digitized by Google

The wharves have no continued range; mostly on wooden piles—they break off, and we can only land in certain spots: the one most frequented is the *English Coffee House*, including its own landing,—near the largest hotel,—the "*Two Augustes*," kept by one *Auguste Mile* — very expensive, and quite French: there are other hotels, but here, all English travellers are directed, as their charges are high, and they dine at seven — two things indispensable; this is at the left extremity of the high street most frequented; the bazaar being at the other, towards the barracks, on the right of the town, as we look at it from the harbour: this right, is the Turkish side, where the Pasha resides; the Greeks keeping more on the left.

Most part of the town lies low, the Turkish end only, creeping some distance up the nearest hills, crowned by a castle and fort: beyond, at the back, mountains rise in a majestic range, continued more or less high all round; the highest, pretty near, rising, it is said, three thousand feet.

There is but one conspicuous mosque, and few minarets: walking along the streets, the same features occur as at Stamboul. There is a bazaar, rich in carpets, Turkish and Persian: the women wear the upper part of their head-dress, the yak-mash, of black gauze, and it is kept from the face by a kind of bow, giving an odd appearance. A good many loaded camels are met in

Digitized by Google

the streets,—I did not see a single one at Constantinople.

After an hour's walk along the one street, and a peep at the small bazaar, there seems nothing left to see, or do, unless a ride into the suburbs, on donkeys, may be worth while. Some of the merchants have their houses in the environs, up the flatter part of the valley, to the left, on the only road out of the town; but even now, there is said to be very little security from robbers,—Turkish police vigilance being intermittent at best; the last band have been but partially dispersed,—and those caught not at all or partially punished.

Vegetables are better, I think, and more plentiful than at Constantinople; green peas, of a good kind—the first we have seen in Turkey. I got a hearth-rug and a brown burnous,—the only things in the bazaar particularly tempting and moderate in price—a pound each. A custom-house officer intercepts us at the wharf, and expects *backshish!* these fellows are only troublesome, if not paid in this way; any export duty is not their object.

On our way to Smyrna we had two ladies of fortune (sisters) passengers. I was delighted to see such fine samples of our island beauties. They were very handsome—one of them lovely: they had been five years on their travels all over the Continent, and much here in the East, among the Greeks and Turks, with their

Digitized by Google

lady's-maid and a clever courier, who managed every thing for them. Such Cosmopolitan maiden philosophers are not at all uncommon. They are met everywhere, now-a-days, all over the world — India, China, Australia, California! no voyage too hazardous, no land too strange or distant. We men are scarcely ahead of them in our rovings. I was very sorry when they left us; conversation at the table lost its zest. I could not help musing on this peculiar roaming feature, in search of novelty, in our women, quite independent of any man, and only seen as yet in the daughters of Great Britain.

They were next for Athens, and meantime went to the wretched French hotel—where I called, and found they had ridden out on donkeys, in the melting sun, dust, and teazing flies—what a contrast to their own hall, woods, lawns, comforts, and friends! And yet they meant to remain abroad for another year—another year! And thus they waste their sweetness on Turks or the Acropolis. But what a pity years and years ago they were not made useful and happy wives at home.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. X.

LEAVE SMYRNA. — ISLANDS. — ANCHOR AT ALEXANDRIA. — THE SHIPPING. — TOWN LIGHT-HOUSE. — PALACE. — PACHA. — DONKEY BOYS. — CAFÉ EXCHANGE ROOMS. — SQUARE OF HOTELS. — BAZAAR. — CANAL. — FILLAR AND NEEDLE. — LOAD WITH COTTON. — AND CRAM WITH PASSENGERS. — START FOR MALTA. — COAL. — ON TO GIBRALTAR. — SILENT CHANGES. — SPAIN. — PASSAGE HOME. — A WORD ON SHIPS AND STEAMERS.

LEAVING Smyrna after a day's stay, we run along the coast, winding among many islands, Scio the largest —which last we were near enough to distinguish some pretty spots. The coast of Asia and all these islands are mountainous and rocky, the shores bold, the outlines everywhere grand.

We leave Rhodes on the left, too far to make out its details — and do not see *Candia*, though so large an island, at all. We lay off (the lighthouse in sight) Alexandria on the third night, and running in early next day, get a pilot from the forts and cluster of windmills west of the harbour's mouth; where the shore is bold: by closing well in with it, the passage into the shipping is easy and plain enough.

Digitized by Google

Already the heat is quite insupportable with a south-easterly wind, as we have it: now the middle of May; a swarm of musquitoes and most annoying flies fill the air, in spite of the strong breeze.

A dozen boats sail off to us, much like our own, each with a man and boy in it: they soon get all our *pilgrims*, and take them on shore bag and baggage; and I am as glad as they are, poor fellows, that they are out of the clutches of these salt water bruins.

A Turk or two came off to give pratique — and there is some talk of *passports*, to the *Greeks;* for we have taught these Turks all our European stupid contrivances of annoyance.

It is so very hot, I cannot muster resolution to go on shore! These flies are the modern plagues of Egypt; enough without any other; either locusts or the plague. Flocks of sea-gulls flutter near our stern, to pick up refuse eatables.

There are a good many ships in the harbour, but no steamers; two or three Englishmen come off to enquire about a passage, anxious to get away from such a place, and no wonder!

Alexandria I think exceeds what we are led to expect of it. Independent of its square of hotels, exchange, and offices, there are some pretty wide streets and large houses — but sand and dust and heat and real Egyptian

Digitized by Google

flies are quite insufferable. The day is scorching; a south-east wind blows, and brings us off a cloud of flies and mosquitoes. They cling to one horribly, and at night continue the day's torments!

So much for us strangers; but this eternal glare of sand and whitened walls is dreadful; one thinks of ophthalmia, and already, though hardly arrived, I long to get away.

We remain a week, and I fully intended to run up to Cairo; particularly as they talked of a railroad completed for a few miles beyond the canal. But at the exchange and coffee-house, the only spot where a paper is to be seen or the least thing known, I find the steamer only starts upwards about once a week — even then uncertain, depending on Indian passengers; that the steamer from England has not arrived though due several days; that the hotels are all full of expectant *Indians* impatient to continue on homewards: so there is no chance of getting up the Nile.

The lighthouse at the north point of the harbour, two hundred feet high, is in one equal column, and the Pasha's Palace near it, are handsome objects from the harbour; next them the arsenal or dockyard; and then the line of the town walls and wharves; and following round, more walls, sand hills, and windmills in groups: no mosques or minarets meet the eye; indeed they are

Digitized by Google

few; and built very low comparatively, not much seen, even where all is flat. Pompey's Pillar is just seen to the right — not so, Cleopatra's Needle, which lies at the extremity of the new harbour, beyond the body of the city, at the north part of which a kind of neck divides the two harbours.

The outer forts are at each end of a tongue of land next the sea, forming both harbours, in the shape of a T; but the new one is empty, and at best only fit for coasters.

There are forty or fifty vessels here taking in wheat, or cotton, some few: but the greater part are our colliers, bringing coals, now at three pound the ton: one collier refused four pound ten at Messina, thinking to get more here.

The Pasha's men of war have all been sent to the Sultan; the only ones visible here are an old seventy-four as a kind of guard-ship, with but a few men on board, and her topmasts down; another old line-of-battle ship in the dock-yard and a few hulks; nor is there a single steamer of any kind in the harbour, except ourselves, at this moment.

There is apparently very little doing. In fact, this *Abbas Pasha* thinks of nothing but his own oppressive monopoly, hates the whole Christian world, and would willingly never see our faces. Things, once advancing

Digitized by Google

in our European fashion under his grandfather, stand still or retrograde; and but for the transit of our Indian officers and civilians, at the hotels, on the donkeys, and in the shore-boats, the little stir seen would cease! These are the last facts told us by men of business here, where all our English merchants congregate at the Exchange, Coffee-house, and reading rooms, where we see the *Times* of about a month old, an Italian Gazette with nothing in it, and some old *Charivaris*. Even this is a welcome lounge out of the dust and glare of the great square.

I am struck by the activity and intelligence of the Arabs, particularly their harbour boatmen and donkey boys, who all speak a few words of English.

From the landing wharf you ride in about a mile along a street suburb to the square; then if the heat is not too great, continue on about the town to the streets on either side; to the bazaar, where nothing is seen very tempting, except, perhaps, a blue burnous and red tassels, or good strong yellow slippers. Or take your way to the west suburbs to Pompey's Pillar, where one "*G. Button*" has helped to vulgarise the pedestal of this noble granite shaft and one *Thompson* above.

We pass some inclosures, of the date palm, the only bit of green visible anywhere. Passing the column half a mile, we come to the east of the *Mah-*

Digitized by Google

moudièh Canal, where I saw a steam-boat or two lying idle. The water-wheels raising water from this canal are ingenious. Then, by a circuit outside the city walls, and entering by another gate, we come upon the new harbour side, where the obelisk stands, (*Cleopatra's Needle*), with a second granite obelisk prostrate, and covered over by some one of our Consuls, near the wall, to preserve it from being chipped and broken; perhaps with some very remote prospect of one day sending it to England!

The one standing rests on a broken point, on a crumbling loose stone base, so insecure that the least shock would topple it over; perhaps, the removal of a single stone! Nobody ever comes near this more remote inner harbour, which contains nothing—perhaps occasionally a few fishing boats or a stray coaster requiring but a foot or two depth of water to float in.

A simple map of any city is worth a hundred descriptions. Alexandria is quite flat, as are all these shores. The French raised a mound, and planted a fort in the centre of the town, which still exists, a kind of citadel—but in decay and neglect.

On landing at the transit wharf, where all baggage is first deposited — mails and passengers; and where there is a guard; and where the donkeys congregate to carry you on to the square of the consuls, of hotels, and business of the place, you at once enter

Digitized by Google

the town, and ride your donkey up the street to this square, about a mile. The distances in any direction in any of the streets are nothing, — except this one in, not half a mile; and were it not for the glare and heat, it would be much easier walking than riding; though, indeed, the asses are good little things, and shuffle along quickly; but the trouble is to keep them clear of the crowd — of women and children. Half the English walk up, and take advantage of the shady side of the streets; which, on donkey-back, you cannot do so well.

The Arab boys, intelligent, cheerful creatures, follow you up close, and seem to prefer a full run; perhaps to get rid of their "ugly customers" all the quicker at the exchange coffee-house and reading-rooms — the only spot you can poke your head into. This exchange is a sort of subscription casino — in one with the coffee-rooms, open to every body; and any of the agents or merchants give you the *entrée*.

The only Lions I hear of besides the Pillar and Obelisk, are the slave market, the pacha's gardens, towards the canal, and the bazaar — all done in an hour's trotting about. We must see everything; but they are, after Stamboul, hardly worth the trouble: still, though inferior as specimens of the East, the Arabs here are more Turkish than the Turks of the Sultan. The mixture of Greeks is not so predominant. As to the

Digitized by Google

street population, one sees fewer red *Fezes*, hardly ever a Greek or Turkish lady, or any female above the lower classes; but all, I think, more cheerful and intelligent than at Constantinople.

Many of the porters, boatmen, and boys have a smattering of English, and less of the lingua franca, or Italian, than I expected to find; less French, too—though the French are more at home here than we are, and keep almost all the shops and hotels.

Not only the donkey-boys, but the boatmen and their boys, are extremely lively, good-natured and intelligent. They handle their boats admirably under sail, —no longer caïques,— they are much like our own.

The present ruler, *Abbas Pacha**, resides at Cairo entirely — never comes to Alexandria; his palace here is shut up, but may be seen.

In other things he is getting back as fast as he can to the pristine state of good Mussulmen.

A large inclosure of date palms, whose waving crowns form the only bit of green visible anywhere, is called the Pacha's Garden; it forms the only promenade possible. I trot on once more to the end of the *Mahmoudièh* Canal, near which the talked-of rail to Cairo, and across the Isthmus, stops short, after being completed some twelve or thirteen miles, with little prospect of being proceeded with. To

* He is since dead.

Digitized by Google

be sure, if it ever pays, it must be by us English, and our money must make it, if ever done. Alexandria may be tolerable during the winter, but with the first month of spring comes heat insupportable — a glare enough to put one's eyes out. No green meets the eye — no colour but yellow and white.

Ten thousand plagues hover in the air — mosquitos, and peculiar, devilish, flies, if possible, more tormenting — what entomologist would dare classify them? This happens the moment the wind changes to the south.

With a north wind we find it pretty tolerable, though already the sun has a force here more oppressive than in our hottest August days at home.

How strong must the incentive be to make money, to induce any Englishman to remain in such a land! — and yet there are a good many; at least, they should speak Arabic, and, after the tanning of ten or twenty years, with a good Mussulman oblivion of all that makes life desirable in their own country, attempt some little comfort and consistency, by turning Turk in good earnest. No doubt any man may become anything, by a firm resolve to stick to it — when, "custom becomes a second nature."

To carve out one's fortune in youth, rather than idle shamefully at home on one's friends, better go to the antipodes, or grub with the *quasi* brutes of the interior of Australia; but it moves one's special wonder to find

Digitized by Google

such men as Murray putting on a consul's harness here — from the wild freedom of the Pawnee wigwam — fresh from the luxuries, the varied fun and exquisite blandishments of a palace! Not that Mr. Murray is here now — somebody else, in quest of a small ambition and a large salary, has superseded him, to settle with the flies and the sands as they best can. Politically, none of our consuls can be of much use to their country unless long resident, and speaking the language of the country fluently. A little French, Italian, or lingua franca, is but a hobbling make-shift — how talk to the Pacha, or men in office, of their interests or of ours! Interpreters' interpretings are a mere solemn idle farce, and never lead to anything — anywhere.

Look at this same Egypt! — we have not advanced, to any good understanding, a single step these fifty years. The carts to and from Cairo to Suez, and the refuge houses, were entirely the creation of poor Waghorn's persevering enterprise — barely tolerated for the sake of a direct revenue! at Cairo, without title, authority, or any encouragement from our enlightened government, except a little penurious reimbursement, wrung from them for very shame, when the thing was done; and extended in the same unwilling, unhandsome fashion to his widow.

From having a long table in the cabin, with nobody at it, suddenly forty or fifty Indians pour off from the hotels, with fifty or a hundred tons of luggage.

Digitized by Google

The regular Indian steamer from Southampton had missed her turn, and, as I have said, the hotels in the square were crammed with these Anglo-Eastern nabobs, excessively anxious to be no longer victimised or detained on their way. They were but too delighted to find a passage could be contrived for them on board our steamer.

The new comers were composed of the usual persons on leave, or retiring from service—generals, colonels, captains, subs and civil servants, with their ladies, and a plentiful sprinkling of little ones, going to England for their education! Would'nt it be better to bring them up in India, where most likely their future fortune lies?

It is but fair to say our captain and his steward managed to stow them all away, and feed them excellently well, and that, too, at a very moderate fare home—only twenty pounds: this last item, considering how Indian travellers are fleeced on all hands, gave additional satisfaction.

Now that we have a good heterogeneous mixture of men, women and children, we have the usual humours, amusements, and laughable incidents common to sea-voyages; where so many strangers are suddenly thrown together. The most fortunate of us were only two in a cabin, over each other, and not even room to sit; four in a cabin, and six, fell to the lot of the majority. These last including the married couples and their children;

Digitized by Google

some babies, with their Indian *Ayahs*, who contrived, poor things, not to lose *caste*, by eating their little messes alone, with certain precautions.

All the Indian officers wore *tiles* of the most fantastic descriptions: some, a cotton wadded helmet; others a shawl, as a superstructure, round the crown of a *wide-awake*; others, caps of queer contrivances. The ladies were less remarkable.

Our dinners passed off very agreeably, succeeded by a walk, arm-in-arm, on the quarter-deck, of an evening.

Tea brought on renewed social chat, and the favourite round game of *vingt-un*, which generally produced much laughter; heard, indeed, above the incessant din of the screw, and clatter of the tiller-chains.

This same screw is a stern nuisance, and mars all cabin comforts. You cannot write — hardly read. In this particular, the *fore-cabin*, for second-class passengers, is much the best off.

As these vessels make passengers but a secondary object, there was no piano; so that our only music consisted in the squallings of the children, *con strepito*, pretty incessant. We had to get used to it with a good grace, as their mothers were very amiable, and had their own peculiar troubles with their small fry, added to the inevitable disagreeables of "*aboard-ship*."

Having taken in a cargo of cotton, we start for

Digitized by Google

Malta; a long stretch of eight hundred miles —a run of four days, unless by fast steamers; screw ships seldom go beyond nine or ten knots at best; and we have a constant west wind against us.

We pass transports now and then, with munitions of war, and occasionally a steamer.

Malta is more quiet and dull since the departure of our troops, of course, and things settled down into the usual routine. We take in coal (all our steam companies have coal depôts at the chief ports), and once more steam on west, passing the fine high Island of Pantalaria, just a hundred miles west of Malta. Next we see the mountains of Sicily to the right, and about Tunis on the left; pass between the Island of Galata and the Sister Rocks, off the coast of Africa, which is all along high and bold: on these rocks the *Avenger* war-steamer was lost. We keep the African mountains in sight, till past Algiers, whose lighthouse alone was visible from our deck on the second evening out: then cross the Mediterranean to the Spanish side, seeing its snow-capped mountains near Cape de Gatte next morning; and arriving off Gibraltar during the night of Saturday; the fourth day—and anchor next morning to coal. All these lands look their best at this time of the year, while yet their rocky mountains contrast beautifully with their green plains and valleys.

So is our *rock* seen to great advantage; frequent

Digitized by Google

showers bringing their flowers and gardens to perfection —almost burnt up in the summer. The whole colony is much improved of late years, the walls and forts repaired, strengthened, and the town doubled in houses and population, in spite of rigid garrison rules; a great many Spanish families make it their home, and there is a constant intercourse with *Algeziras* opposite, and with the country across the *lines*. Indeed, Gibraltar is the best market the Spaniards have, in an immense circuit on these shores; for their agricultural produce.

One is hardly aware of the size and grandeur of Gibraltar till on shore in the streets, or walking in the garden promenade of the *Almeida*, under this stupendous mountain of granite. There are rides round the west face, and paths, looking like lines of thread, lacing its rugged sides; half way up, two little circular plantations are nestled above all practicable horse-roads, and add to the richness of the whole.

The town is divided by the garden below (the Almeida and parade), the south town being a kind of *West End*, where all the finest houses and villas with small gardens are found.

Altogether, one cannot fancy the rock a disagreeable station—subject, however, to the strictness of a garrisoned citadel, ever on the watch; where you go in and out, not through an open gate or portal, but, on the water side, through a small wicket, where only one

Digitized by Google

individual can pass at a time—and sentinels are stationed every where:—where it requires a pass after sunset—where every thing is military—steeped to the lips;—in the drawing-room, every day ideas, and household words: here a man must be a soldier or nothing.

Coming from the east, approaching Gibraltar, the continents on both sides are high mountains, and bold shores. *Apeshill,* on the African side, is first seen, soaring to the clouds above Ceuta (from the east). Here, at the narrow entrance to the Mediterranean, the winds and current, and waves, are "still vexed," fierce, inexorable: it is difficult to get out, even with a favourable wind, if light; if adverse, impossible, to sailing vessels; which linger or anchor at the back of the rock, after beating up the Spanish coast.

In this difficulty, steamers have much advantage; getting over this constant current of the Atlantic pouring in; but the weather is capricious, and gusts and storms frequent.

The bay of Gibraltar is mostly full of shipping, riding at single anchor, in or out; stopping a few days, as at a house of call, but constantly on the *qui vive;* as the bay is only sheltered on the east by the *rock* itself, and is open to the straits, which are about eight miles wide; while on the opposite side of the bay, at Algeziras, six miles off, the extensive plains at the foot of the mountains, gather the west and north-west winds as to a focus, sweep-

Digitized by Google

ing across the bay—where, indeed, the sea is very seldom smooth—to the great annoyance of smaller vessels and boats. Even landing at the rock is difficult—at the extreme end of the town, far from the anchorage—and the boat fares expensive,—by government regulation.

A small steamer runs backwards and forwards to Algeziras, at fifteen pence; but they refuse to take our currency, making it an excuse for imposition. This is but one trifle of ten thousand, in which, friendly, grateful Spain, shows her catholic hatred of England! Still, they will take our dollars—but our shillings only at eleven pence!

While Gibraltar is before my eyes, as time flies—now the midsummer of 1854—what can I say new of a place so well known, a place exhausted in pen-and-ink and pencil descriptions? Nothing! And yet much is new, and silent changes go on even in the very granite itself, which gets worn and gnawed away in tiny portions, by that pigmy—man. Yet generations pass away, and its outward form is still the same! The town has grown almost into a city, with a city's luxuries; for there is an opera, and the officers have races. Cabs, carriages and hack-horses abound; society is split into circles, in imitation of London; and its shops glitter in expensive European things, infinitely superior to what they were fifty years ago, in Nelson's day!

Steamers alone have changed the face of things—

Digitized by Google

thick coming and going, they bring it within five days or a week of England, and tie it closer to its own Spanish shore — to Algeziras, Tarifa and Cadiz; for still land-carriage is as barbarous as ever, as are *posadas* and *tondas*, where inquisitive travellers are taken in as of old.

For the *morale* of the *rock* — those only can know who dwell on it. As far as England goes, it is still the same; governor succeeds governor in a long succession of old officers, more or less disciplinarians, more or less popular, for the brief term of a worn-out life. One thing is clear, whoever commands should speak Spanish well, and be instructed to cultivate the good will and interests of the surrounding country; visiting the authorities at each town of the smaller sea-shore circuit, and encouraging by every means a friendly and trading intercourse for our mutual benefit; for it is of no use lamenting the miserable imbecility and ingratitude and tyranny of its government, where all seems so very silly and so very selfish.

The *people* of all *countries* are innately well disposed and friendly; the present generation knows nothing of the last, and, after all, cannot be said to be ungrateful; crowns and ministers alone recollect nothing — know nothing — learn nothing!

The panorama of Spain, and Africa opposite, as seen from any part of Gibraltar, is extremely rich and fine;

Digitized by Google

Apes Hill, one of the Pillars of Hercules, backed by high mountains equal to itself; and *Ceuta*, with its long low neck of land, immediately opposite our "*Rock*," forming the narrowest part of the passage. Noble mountains frame in the picture round the bay, from Algeziras to *St. Roche* on its hill; and so stretch to the east and west.

The lower grounds, green in their young crops and pasturages, are now seen after the showers to the greatest advantage; for Spain, on this her southern side, is much burnt up in the summer.

She is beautiful only in the distances, with the lights and shadows of her mountains.

I went over to Algeziras for an hour by one of the small steamers. They take nearly an hour to cross the bay. There was a fair going on, and a large amphitheatre, just outside the town, was filling for an approaching *bull-fight*.

I had no time, nor any inclination, to witness this cruel, cowardly sport — it was quite enough to see the violent contrast between the three or four miserable horses led in for the *piccadores*, and the rich gorgeous dresses in silver and gold of the men themselves about to ride them.

A more pleasant contemplation was the general air of neatness and comfort of the whole town. The houses of two stories, without exception, looking as clean and

Digitized by Google

bright as possible; the grated windows on the ground-floor so ornamental as to do away with all ideas of prison bars; with many groups of young girls laughing slily behind them, watching the crowds passing up the chief street.

The town is not so large as it appears across the bay, —we should class it as a market-town; nor did I see any signs of active trade of any sort, though many small vessels and coasters are anchored on this side of the bay; but the "*Rock*" absorbs all the activity and stir of this part of the coast. The market is much superior, and everything cheaper, than in any of the adjacent towns wholly Spanish. Just now oranges, cherries, and small peaches are in great plenty; potatoes, peas, and other vegetables, and all extremely cheap; oranges, very sweet and good, eighty and one hundred for a shilling.

People say little of passages or of steamers; but nothing so much concerns us travellers, whether we cross the Atlantic, or coast the shores of France, Spain, and Portugal, where the weather and the waves are even more fickle and fierce than further off; or, crossing our ever-vexed two hours of channel, we again have to take boat at Marseilles or Trieste.

The Mediterranean boats, French, Neapolitan, or English, are expensive, and very indifferent in any one good quality. Ours are the most liberal, on the whole;

Digitized by Google

for, in addition to the same fares, the others make us pay for the table extra.

The *Oriental* boats to Alexandria are the largest and the best; starting from Southampton; but they are always crowded with Indian officers and civilians going and coming, with families of spoiled children. Next come various screw-steamers of late years, mercantile in purpose, but carrying passengers at reduced rates. They call at Gibraltar, Malta, Alexandria, and Smyrna, to and from Constantinople, when they go so far. Many of them, like this we are in, are now taken up by government to carry horses and troops.

They are almost all of iron, and the shaking and rattling of the screw is quite enough to upset any ordinary nerves; no *time* can reconcile one to it. It is impossible to read, or write, or sleep, if by chance and ill luck your cabin is near the stern. Then, again, the extreme length of these boats, and their absurd narrowness, make them dangerous in a heavy gale; nor are they built strong in proportion.

So much for the boats. It must be admitted, indeed, that their engines are admirable, and that they contrive to carry large cargoes, besides the necessary coal for a week or ten days' run; re-coaling at their own depôts at the Rock, at Malta, and Smyrna, even at Constantinople, and thus avoiding the enormous price of coal bought in the Mediterranean.

Digitized by Google

By-the-bye, the coal hulk at Alexandria was no less than the "*Ariadne;*" one of those wretched post-sloops, —hardly yet set aside—the bane of our navy—the abhorred of seamen: but this particular sloop-of-war, or "floating coffin," was once honoured by the command of that true genius, and noble seaman, *Frederick Marryat;* who took her out to Pegu in our first Burmese war, and who has left us witty evidence enough of the unfitness of this kind of vessel. Poor Marryat!—once my dear friend,—his premature death is an irreparable loss.

We have but the few hours while filling up our coal, and start for England at sunset, passing Tarifa during the night—Cadiz, and Cape St. Vincent on the second morning; the wind the whole way blowing obstinately against us; with the usual swell of the Atlantic. We skirt the coast of Spain about twenty-five miles off, and pass outside the *Birlings*, island, and rocks; here we see many fine, sturdy fishing-boats, twenty miles from the shore.

The nearer home we get the more impatient we grow; and yet patience! patience! we have got to pass Cape Finisterre, and the Bay of Biscay; always an ugly customer, though not *quite* so bad as many accidents, and Dibdin's famous song, describe it. If the sea is worse than elsewhere in the Atlantic, it must be from the great rolling-in swell meeting the bottom at

Digitized by Google

a less depth! but, however capricious the winds and waves, this coast is not much worse than our own chops of the Channel.

Then come our Scilly Isles in soundings, and our St. George's and British Channels; each troublesome and dangerous, when all other troubles and dangers are passed; as but too many have sadly proved. But hereabouts all curiosity ceases; nobody can ever pick up or invent anything worth talking about on their return home—from the moment they catch sight of the Land's End, all narrative breaks off abruptly.

In a pretended obedience to this established rule, I should be careful not to say a word of our waters or of our land—everybody is supposed to know all about them so well! Yet how much there is highly interesting which our light-reading world would be very glad to know something about!

Of what goes on and is to be seen, for instance, in the British and St. George's Channels; of its shores, of its towns (of late years); of the noble appearance of the Wicklow and the Welsh mountains (equal to many Greek), as we steer up St. George's Channel; or, when happily we get well on, still advancing towards Liverpool, and turning the corner at Beaumaris and the Skerries Light, we thread that fifty miles of intricate maze, of muddy sea and shoals, leading to the *Mersey's* mouth; of which nothing is known beyond those thrill-

Digitized by Google

ing tales of disastrous wrecks which every now and then fill the columns of our journals.

Of how long since the middle ages Liverpool was but a few huts on the beach, and the Mersey was nothing; when ancient, quaint Chester and her little river and sea-approach, now neglected, were the great mart of the small commerce of those days.

Such are the silent workings of time and tides! Our tides, indeed, are the most wonderful in the world; the most violent, awful, and useful in their every-day effects. They and some partial knowledge of our coast, form the sole study and business of men's lives; not alone coasting-masters and pilots, who, by a life's buffeting, gain most local experience, but all our naval and mercantile marine. Yet how imperfect—witness our daily disasters; as often traced to ignorance and shamefully defective vessels as to the elements!

All this would induce one to linger on our Welsh and Lancastrian sea-approaches—more uncertain, more troublous, and more dreaded, than the quiet, simple Scylla and Charybdis—were I equal to the task, or if it were not time, now that I find all my fellow-passengers excited at the near prospect of once more setting foot on their native land, to put away my own foolscap, destined most likely never to see the light. Away then with pen and ink, let me share the general joy! Brief

Digitized by Google

joys, so few and far between! lasting a minute or an hour; obtained by months or years of misery, or of apathy, or of *ennui.*

People say, travel. The reminiscences of your travels, of distant lands and people, of strange and curious things, of the excitement and dangers you have undergone, will cheer and sweeten old age at your winter fireside! and amuse your family circle and juvenile offspring! Not now-a-days, at any rate! Everybody is travelling. Youths vote their own fire-sides a bore, the governor and *his* travels into the bargain. Our little island supplies the whole world with fortune and adventure hunters (including the *diggings* in both hemispheres), and curiosity-mongers of both sexes. Some, like myself, tell their own story; the great body, perhaps more wisely, keep it snug to themselves: but I think I may fairly doubt if any pleasurable sensations are derived from the contemplation of our wanderings; on the contrary, we do but grow the more discontented, unsettled, doubtful, and unhappy!

We become more wide-awake to our own absurdities, prejudices, anomalies, and imperfections; not only the inevitable and pardonable, but those the most conceited, stolid, and obtuse; which are, from education and habit, among ourselves, considered excellences! Thence, as no man in any one country can ever live to see any perfect or radical change in anything, we are not likely

Digitized by Google

to become more contented or happy, when we retire from our *travels* and our street, to sit down for the quiet rest of our days in some country cot to cultivate cabbages. This, by the way, to those who are obliged to remain sensibly at home—they have the best of it, in simply and so easily reading what we have got to say.

And now that I have got rid of that abominable *screw*, which stunned and jolted facts and ideas out of my head, and at my ease can run through my journal, with a foolish wish to see it in print, I grow frightened at its infinite faults, at none more than a certain tone, I could wish more diffident and humble. But I cannot write it all over again—it must take its chance; if it escapes the reproach of prolixity and dulness, or, worse, of having found nothing but *mares' nests*, I must consider myself pretty well off.

If I venture to hope that, in the course of what I have touched on, something may be extracted to prove of use to those who intend, sooner or later, going the same way, — so too, now that I must wind up, many things occur to me which, introduced in their proper places, might have been more acceptable than political disquisitions or querulous aggressions against things as we find them.

One stubborn fact, however, which I have alluded to

Digitized by Google

more than once, impresses itself on me more forcibly than ever, in this immensely long, narrow, weakly-built, iron screw-steamer; and I cannot resist endeavouring to explain it to my readers, with a view to draw the attention, at least of our travelling world, to the fact.

It is the continued defect of our naval architecture! All our knowing naval people will stare at such an assertion. They would possibly admit the thing here and there in detail — one ship ugly, another crank, another a bad sea-boat, or a dull sailer; but I am sorry to say our ship and boat-building is generally and radically wrong, from the first lines chalked out in the model lofts of our Queen's or private yards throughout the empire!

It would exhaust a pamphlet to explain all this in detail; but it is sufficiently proved at a glance, in the eye of any seaman who has ever considered the proper shapes of floating bodies:—but to look at our ships *loaded, afloat;* and, going on board, simply walk their decks!

The great defect I allude to is so obvious, that to me it is quite unaccountable how it is we so obstinately persist in it. It is the constant want of proportionate breadth in our vessels afloat, from a cutter to a frigate — I can hardly except our line-of-battle ships; and the consequence of this long, narrow, peg-top build is, that none of them carry their guns high enough out of the water, that they want room inboard, and that essential

Digitized by Google

stability in a moderate sea-way, to enable their guns to be carried with ease, and worked with advantage.

As time has gone on, even up to sending Sir Charles Napier's fleet into the Baltic, this constant error has been persisted in through all the more recently-launched craft — *steamers* and all, which latter vessels, most especially, should be perfectly *flat-floored,* and draw the least possible water! — instead of which, they are so deep in the water as to be unable to approach any coast! They artificially multiply all the inevitable and natural dangers of rivers, or shallows, or rocky shores.

I could name at once many of our steamers totally unfit to fight their main-deck guns in any thing of a sea, so *low* do they carry them; and, indeed, when all coal, stores, &c. are on board, they must be almost useless and helpless even in a moderately rough sea or rough weather! It is this wretched build — all *under water,* and not half enough above — that I think distinguishes England's present marine, great and small.

Then, again, our forecastles contracted* — sharp up! and down, it is buried in a sea way, instead of bearing out above the water-line, to ease her in plunging. Nor is the breadth of beam *carried well out aft,* as it should be, to give room and create buoyancy. All this need not interfere either with a fine entrance or a fine run.

* The new Phaëton for instance, a mere overgrown *cutter* — whose praises were sung—*ad nauseam!*

Digitized by Google

We have nothing to do (and why are we not more wide awake?) but compare our ships with those of the United States, to show us these defects most glaringly, particularly in our small craft and steamers.

Years ago I did myself the honour of representing to the Admiralty the many advantages of flatter floors, more beam*, greater room, everywhere less draught of water, &c; and particularly suggested of what incalculable service a small class of flat-bottomed steamers might be for our coasts and harbours, on the plan partly of the American river steamers, ferry-boats, &c., which, from their drawing so little water, are enabled to put their noses on any beach as easily as a two-decker's launch.

These screw-steamers might carry one or two large guns, on a pivot, at once to defend our shores, carry troops from one point to another, and, in short, form the government active daily carriers, and be our guard *mobile* all round our coast! Mere ferry steamers or tugs on this plan, might turn out on such errands—properly built. Not such lumbering stolid contrivances as our Portsmouth ferry-boat to Gosport!

With bulwarks breast-high, filled in with hammocks

* As this goes to press, I see they have at length built one *dispatch boat* with *beam* enough to draw only six feet water. This is, so far, good,— but no occasion for *three masts!* nor to "*lower*," —and the topsides of such boats might be carried up high enough for any engine; they are not meant to lay before batteries!

Digitized by Google

or havresacks, troops would be sheltered from musketry.

These are the things I now, on my return home, find wanted and cried out for in the Baltic, to land our troops, and *cover their landing!* and generally to scour the shores and look into shallow waters and rivers. So will they be wanted in the Black Sea.

But we are so in love with grubbing under water without room to stir in on deck above it (while you may wash your hands over the side!) that the "*dispatch*" boat built to meet this demand, I see draws thirteen or fourteen feet water!!! (with guns at the sides!) when such things should not draw *five*, and should be, as to capacity for carrying troops and fighting one pivot gun, three times as efficient. The models for such boats may be seen in every river and harbour of the United States, where immense boats (floating platforms), and swift, (partly from skimming *over* the water, not under!) may be seen drawing but from eighteen inches to two or three feet! carrying hundreds of tons—and quite equal to such seas as the Baltic or Euxine; but I am persuaded, even in a gale of wind, they would make better weather of it than the things we send afloat. As it affects mere passengers in our slight built long low narrow iron steamers (called splendid!) this pervading defect is of consequence, both to their comfort and safety. In a gale and a heavy sea, a clumsy wide French fishing boat

Digitized by Google

would be infinitely more safe. I am persuaded half the disasters we hear of, both on our coasts and at sea, spring from this egregious fault — which nobody, scientific or working by rule of thumb, in or out of our yards, seems to suspect or have the least idea of.

If it is ever happily departed from in the right way, it is in the vessels built by us for other governments!* The dispatch boat built in the river the other day for Prussia was a much better boat and more to the purpose than our own poor thing: which, if the Times is to be believed, knocked about so at Spithead — that firing her gun or guns from the ports was quite a failure. It moves one's special wonder how she came to have ports! or how she could possibly, for her size, be made to draw *thirteen feet water!* both queer qualities which exactly unfitted her for the very thing for which she was supposed to be built!

In all our new vessels, steam or sails, nothing is talked of but *speed* — as if other qualities were not equally essential; nay, much more so — imperative.

Thence the awkwardly long low things daily turned out of our yards, with no topsides — no room anywhere and all keel, so sharp they may be said to progress under water rather than above it.

* A notable example of this kind occurred in 1847, when an Anglo-Russian war-steamer brought over the Grand Duke — she lay close to our heavy-rigged, low, deep, tub, the *Dragon*, at Gravesend—Hyperion to a Satyr!

Digitized by Google

Our Clyde and Glasgow builders sin least in this way, but let any man look at our Hamburg boats — our *Irish* boats, those of our *Channel Islands*. Those to France from all our ports in the British Channel, even our fast Gravesend and Greenwich boats; and it is quite impossible to say any one of them is at all *near* what she should be either as to size or speed: all owing to this one radical defect of build — since being down under water such an absurd depth, offers the greatest resistance (no matter how long or how sharp they are) to going ahead; infinitely more than the increased divergence of the angles from the cut-water, thrown out in a flatter and extended floor. This might be illustrated in a hundred ways. But I must have done. I have said enough to set my readers on thinking of what *should* be the good qualities of the sailing or steam vessels they embark in, from the moment they get up the side.

THE END.

Digitized by Google

LONDON:
A. and G. A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-street-Square.

29005

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

3 2044 010 661 528

:cu:

THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

CANCELLED
BOOK DUE
MAY 0 9 1990

Digitized by Google